THE ART OF SOUTH INDIA
TAMILNADU & KERALA

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K.V. SOUNDARA RAJAN

SUNDEEP PRAKASHAN
DELHI
1978

Cover jacket : Dvarapala from the Kuttalanatha temple, Kuttalam, Tirunelveli District, Circa 9th century

First Published : August 1978

Published by Swadesh Prasad Singhal for Sundeep Prakashan
B-149, Ashok Vihar Phase I, Delhi-110 052

Printed by Jagowal Printing Press, 7/15, Kirti Nagar, New Delhi-110 015.

Dedicated
to
the sacred and affectionate
memory of my
mother

FOREWORD

It is a happy idea not only to have thought of the Art of south India Series to explain the rich art-treasures of that region but also to have started accomplishing it in as many volumes as would comprehend definite areas with their own characteristic nuances of affinity and divergence. Tamil Nadu and Kerala have been taken together for a volume in this Series, and it is indeed a very happy event that a scholar of erudition, imagination and taste like Shri K.V. Soundara Rajan has been entrusted with this

It has ever been a joy for me to reflect on not only the kaleidoscopic knowledge of Shri Soundara Rajan but also his original thought and approach towards south Indian art that he has been systematically studying and expounding. The several books that he has already produced have given a taste of his rich equipment and thought-provoking exposition. He has rightly chosen Tamil Nadu and Kerala together, which, as he has himself pointed out, have been a single unit of life and culture from the earliest times to nearly the end of the heyday of the Chola period itself. It is very much later that a *baroque* and *rococo* floridity invaded, but yet charmingly, the Kerala mode of art expression, through the Hoysala channel of Chalukan influence. The language itself did not differ much till rather late in the period of history.

In this book, the author 'gives a brilliant-background, and thought provoking, annals 'discussing the impacts of one area over the other, the influences and counter-influences, the cultural give-and-take, the epicentres of great ideas and singnificant execution. He has rightly pointed out the importance of the south Indian temple in determining not only the way of life but the

trends in every way. He has gone into the nuances of devotion to explain the divergence and the convergence in the different faiths that constitute a composite culture in south India, which spread far beyond her shores in South East Asia, where the inscriptions offer an interesting episode of south Indian history and culture.

In describing early art, he has not only drawn freely from references in early Tamil classics to interpret, but has gone into the origins and development of cave-architecture introduced by the art-minded Pallaya king, Mahendravarman I, whose Mandagapattu inscription is famous in recounting not only his wonderful innovation but also his curious mind as a *vichitrachitta*. The study of south Indian cave-architecture was earlier confined almost all to Pallava, ignoring the Pandyan and Chera monuments, which were then little known or unknown. Thanks to Dr Jouveau. Dubreuil, the phase of south Indian architecture and sculpture was imparted a brighter glow in new dimensions. Shri Soundara Rajan, having been intensely studying these monuments of south India when handling the Temple Survey project, has, with his excellent knowledge of Sanskrit and Silpa text. made a definite contribution towards the better understanding of a comprative story of the growth and consummation of the south Indian temple in the areas of the Pallavas, Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras, often highlighting neighbourly cultural waves of exuberance of Ganga, Nolamba, Chalukya and so forth. He has thus vividly described the peculiar characteristics of the temples in their various stages of growth, definitely fixing even the position of the *parivara-devatas* and so forth, additions of *mandapas* and pillared halls, starting from the earliest structural additions to the caves themselves ; and has demonstrated the most interesting sequence in architectural and sculptural growth. He has specially laid stress on the Chola innovations during the great period of efflorescence and has readily evaluated the richness of contribution from the Imperial Chola dynasty. The Pallavas and the Cholas have particularly so enriched the tradition of murals that he has taken this factor also for his adumbration. The bronzes of south India are famous and he has appropriately chosen masterpieces to illuminate this phase as well.

The illustrations that he has chosen for this book are selected with special care so that he has given as far as possible excellent examples hitherto not very well-known rather than the very best masterpieces that are already often repeated. It is indeed most heartening to find the lovely Goddess bathed by celestial elephants from Uttiramerur or Devi performing penance amidst five fires, the Trivikrama from Namakkal, the charming Jyeshtha and the metal image of Skanda from Gangaikonda cholapuram. Among the murals that he has described, it is noteworthy that he has given the Deví from Panamalai and Raja Raja with Karuvurar from the Brihadisvara temple. His choice of the rare sculptures of Lakulisa and Garudantika is again very significant.

His discussion is ever so refreshing as he provokes thought. A book like this which is not just an account but is of the nature of an interpretation is most valuable for students and scholars alike. The map marking important sites in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the comparative charts and the architectural diagrams and plans both of the ground, elevation and section make the illustrations so much more vivid. His appendices are extremely valuable and the glossary of technical terms is a boon to those who could acquaint themselves with a terminology of the *sthapati* indicating every little part of a monument in its general from and subtle details.

His terse, imaginative text evokes further thought, which is exactly the essential purpose of a book on historical evolution and aesthetic appreciation of form and thought, varying from age to age and areas separated in distance and dynastic outlook, replete with the sculptors' and the painters' own pride to boot. Shri Soundara Rajan has rightly pointed out at the very commencement that traditions started in each region with master-masons such as *Kevada perun-tacchan* in the vicinity of Mahabalipuram, *Paramesvara perun-tacchan* of Uttiramerur and *Brahmamarayan* of Thanjavur. We know that there were guilds of craftsmen from the earliest times, the most famous being the ivory carvers from Vidisa, who delicately carved in stone a famous *torana* gateway of Sanchi in the early phase of the Satavahana rule. India has continued this tradition during the ages and Soundara Rajan has traced

sequence in history and styles of art in a masterly way in this book, which is bound to be welcomed and read with avidity by students and scholars alike all over. May God bless him with a long life and scholastic career to enable him to write so much more to contribute to learning.

New Delhi
16th July 1978.

C. SIVARAMAMURTI

PREFACE

South India has as much of a geographical individuality as a cultural one. The art of this region has been preserved in an impressive visual form continuously from the earliest time to the later medieval period. It is thus a matter of great personal gratification for the author to write on the "Art of Tamil Nadu & Kerala", as proposed by the Publishers.

Tamil Nadu and Kerala are ideally suited not only for "Destination Tourism" for the international art connoisseurs, but also for educating and stimulating the average Indian citizen upon our profound religio-artistic legacy well-displayed in this region. Many have been the scholarly works on the specific sectors or zones of this vital southern region. It is perhaps for the first time that an integrated compact narrative of the art heritage of this region is being offered, in its authentic socio-cultural background. The author, thus, considers his efforts as amply rewarded. It would be trite to say that the outlook and works of several savants of our land of the past and of the present has inspired the author in his work. He is especially beholden to Sri C. Sivaramamurti, the doyen among our art historians for having graciously agreed to write a Foreword to this book. With a long personal association with him, the author is indeed heartened by his warm sentiments.

The author should not fail to thank the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India for his kind permission for publishing this book and also for his keen personal interest in these studies. He thanks the Archaeological Survey of India Photo archives, for the kind supply of the photographs. Equally due for thanks are Sarvasri A.T. Ponnuswami and M.S. Mani for having enhanced the get-up of the book by their line drawings.

Lastly, he has pleasure in acknowledging the unseen stimulus offered, as always, by his wife, Kumuda, in the work. He has particular happiness in dedicating the book to the memory of his dear mother, who had represented to him the sublimated ideals of the Tamil Culture.

It is the wish and hope of the author that this book will serve as a finite introduction to the study of the art heritage of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, especially for the world of young and interested academic scholars and students.

Ashadha Amavasya,
New Delhi

K.V. Soundara Rajan

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BACKGROUND

A multi-lingual and ethno-social mosaic that the Indian nation undoubtedly is, its oneness in terms of temporal growth and spiritual sustenance had been firmly built by the bricks of its regional history. The lower southern India, in more ways than so far realised, is the repository and the conservatory of much of the intellectual and cultural traditions of the entire country. Its terminal position on the peninsular landmass by no means underwrites a mere marginal relevance in the nation's annals. Time and again, its contribution had formed an integral core of the total ideal of the nation, a reflection of its political and historical vicissitudes. Washed by the three seas, Tamil Nadu and Kerala together present a vivid random sampling, therefore, of this cultural legacy, this spectrum of harmonised divergences, of compromised categories and of federated fractions. A cultural historian will do well, thus to probe its fine art institutions with the hope and prospect of perceiving a microcosm and not the mere varia. Such a probe should take note of the impacts and movements that were set in motion in the region from the early times and which had cultural orientation, epicentres and *elan*.

Creative art is an amalgam of conceptual inspiration, bio-cultural stamina and the penchant for visual translation. Religion, if it is a mere transcendental transaction, would be confined to Man and his Maker alone and would be an inviolate personal and private preserve. But human urge for refinement and gregariousness do not permit of such a clinical hermetically sealed religious experience of every man, *per se*, but presents religion as the combined experience of individuals, as social units and with a

social purpose. Seers and seekers after truth there were and will be, but the empirical terms in which the relationship between God and his creations were idealised and adumbrated clearly 'gave a social content for religion and was at the root of much, if not most, of the religious history of communities, especially in India. Thus, Brahmanical Hinduism drawing its inspiration from the Vedic religion become a common pre-occupation of the entire people, both the classes and the masses and expressed itself in a pattern in the religious art of the country. Art in India was essentially channelised for religious purposes for a long time, notwithstanding secular ideals also having been, now and again, integrated into it. To the average Indian religion is not separate from life. The mysteries of life itself form the core of his religion and have been moulded by the combined experiences of countless generations of multi-racial and polyglot social matrix. Religious art, thus, became the commitment, as it were, of the people, for a common good and gain, albeit intangible in the nature of the gain visualised. The most fundamental base of such a religious ideal comprised the fourfold *purusharthas* or aims of life and the fourfold *asramas* or states in the life-cycle. These ideals and avocations were clearly rooted in the civilized and sophisticated pattern of society which had its economic and cultural facets : *dharma*, primarily representing the acquisition of intellectual training ; *artha*, of material wealth ; *kama* of biological and social satisfaction or fulfilment ; and *moksha*, a gracious shading off into the unknown after mundane death. Much of these ideals were the common fused-products of the indigenous and the aryan thought and traditions already in the distant past, and thus should hardly be considered as born of any ethnic monopoly or sanctity.

In Tamil Nadu, the germ ideals of such a socio-cultural purpose had permeated through several waves of movements in the first millennium B.C. and together shaped its outlook towards the religious art that was created at a subsequent stage, making such an art a regional facet of the national ethos. The early history, socio-political and cultural, of Tamil Nadu and Kerala was, thus characterised by this overlap of the national and regional manifestations and was, therefore, capable of mutually interacting transactions with other adjacent regions, speaking a

common ethico-cultural language. We should add also here, before being done with this chapter, that Kerala and Tamil Nadu formed one integral entity in the early stages till almost the crystalization of the moorings of the regional religious art and its perspectives, in the opening centuries of the christian era. Their separate political and linguistic transformations were not achieved much earlier than the 10th century A.D. The known history of these two tracts should itself begin only a little earlier than Asoka Maurya, if not almost coeval with him, and its formative phases will be narrated in the following chapter unfolding the forces which set the pace of its artistic outlook, and nurtured such an outlook into a finite mould and persuasive idiom in the early historic times, largely coinciding with the '*Sangam*' era—the high noon of its early phase, in thought, literature and social purpose. The art blossomed into monumental proportions under the early Pallavas and the Pandyas and became the household word in the succeeding age of the Imperial Chola power. Its post-Chola devolutions were no less spectacular and altogether the art of Tamil Nadu is sumptuous in both aesthetic and cultural articulations.

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ANNALS

A. Impacts and Movements

The most ancient period, relevant to the study of art and architecture in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, may be said to relate to the Iron Age when the bearers of this momentous iron technology swept into this region and put an end to the pastoral Neolithic cultures that were entrenched in certain areas of northern and western Tamil Nadu in the North Arcot and Salem districts. The importance of the event is great, since for the first time, we have the equipment by way of iron tools which could be used for quarrying slabs out of granite and other rocks, which were utilised then for erecting certain typical funerary monuments called 'Megalithic' cists or dolmens by archaeologists, a fair sprinkling of which is found all over Tamil Nadu. These are also directly associable with the advent of cultivation on a large scale in the region mainly through tank irrigation. These megaliths themselves are found on the foreshores of the countless irrigation tanks found in northern and central parts of Tamil Nadu. During the subsequent centuries of their dispersal into Tamil Nadu, these people whom we may now probably associate with the forebears of the present day Tamils, are seen raising virtually a stable economy and allied crafts and appear to have grown in prosperity and political status in the form of Chola and Pandyan dynasties; that they drew the pointed reference and an implied respect from Emperor Asoka Maurya, in his Rock Edicts, as forming the friendly chieftains outside his border to the South. The stage was seemingly set for the widening of their perspectives by friendly contacts with contemporary monarchs in other parts

of the South and beyond for establishing a cultural individuality for the region. The pan-Indian intercourse took place along several channels simultaneously. Firstly, by the major movements of religious communities of Brahmanical Hinduism and Jainism, into the heartland of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, in significant numbers during the post-Maurya and Satavahana periods, bringing with them not only the builtin patronage by and appreciation of the royalty, but also the close involvement of the trading classes in several of these movements in support of the immigrant and domiciled votaries of the two religions. There was also a simultaneous trend in the southern dynasties, tending to draw up their lineage from hoary northern centres of religion and political power such as the Ikshvakus, Panchalas, Yadavas, Agnikula and others, with the dynastic putative ancestors being claimed from the solar and lunar dynasties of north India. Certain sages like Agastya and Kaundinya had also a great role to play in this large scale movements of people. This considerable shift in the population and of peripathetic kshatriya clans and colonisation of the virgin prosperous tracts of south India urbanised already by the Iron Age revolution gone by resulted in an intercourse of trade and commerce, attendant on such a peaceful penetration.. It transformed the local scene into a colourful era of adventerous and devout Brahmanical and Kshatriya clans which rose to resuscitate the Hindu faith. As a corollary to it, a considerable immigration of brahmin communities took place already from the 2nd-3rd century A.D. onwards. The copper plate charters and other grants of the period indicate a strong *Mimamsa*-oriented Hindu social structure with the royal patrons choosing auspicious dates for donations to vedic studies and allied activities and ritual performances. The implication of the entire movement would seem to be that the indigenous ethno-cultural matrix of the South at that time had been that of a largely trade-oriented Brahmanical, Jain as well as Buddhistic lainty in lower Deccan, Andhra and Tamil Nadu, each with prakritic dialects of its own (among which Tamil was the most dominant tongue) and whose social structure was considerably simplified, uninhibited by cast-iron regulations and economically disparate to a degree. The triple crowned heads of Tamil Nadu, the Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras, were busy nurturing viable economic trade balance through

the enterprising maritime agencies with Mediterranean commercial contacts, who were after the pepper, cardamom and pearls of Indian South; and an intellectual patronage through the *sangams* in the academic and cultural spheres. The inland trade *elite* of their kingdoms were seemingly involved in the patronge of Jain or Buddhists ascetics who occupied the natural caverns in remote hillocks and interior. The Tamil-Brahmi records of the donative inscriptions between the 1st Century B.C. - 2nd Century A.D. relating to the benefactions to these ascetics, in their cave-abodes, form the most extensive significant and finite corpus of the earliest yet written Tamil transactions known to us so far.

The Kongu-Ganga tract

Dharamapuri though virtually one of the latest Districts to be formed (from 1965 only) is a historical vindication of this culturally individualistic area, which before 1965, formed part of Salem district. In its upland and extremely hilly western part with a north-east—south-west strike for the hills, with a highway that nestled among them having formed the route of invasion, annexation and cultural expansion of the Karnata chieftains, more especially the Nolambas, its special contribution was assured. The ancient capital of Tagadur (which seemingly the stretch from the present Dharamapuri town to the adjacent Adiyamankottai, at the 4th mile would be covering) formed one of the culturally integral parts of the Chera segment of the Sangam period. Adiyaman Neduman Anji, the ancient chief of Tagadur had patronised Avvai, the grand old wise lady of Tamil didatic literature, who served, according to tradition as an envoy of his to the king of Kanchi. Anji had matrimonial links with the Cheraman of the Cheras and is credited with a glorious victory against the combined forces of seven kings listed as Chera, Chola, Pandya, Titian, Erumaiyuran, Irunkovenman and Porunan, though *Padirrupattu* colophon suggests that he was also defeated, in turn, by Cheraman and his relatives. The *Purananuru* refers to the *Panai* (Palm tree) emblem of Adiyaman flag and of Adiyaman's expedition on behalf of the overlord Chera against Nannan, at his capital Pali, where he died along with Ay Eyinan, a Chera feudatory, killed by the general of Nannan called Nimili (or Minili). Avvaiyar laments the acquisition of the hero-stone by Adiyaman, leaving her desolate apperently

referring to this battle, if the suggestion implicit in the hero-stone is not to be ignored. The Adiyaman dynasty should properly belong to the Karur line of Chera kings where we hear of Cheraman Tagadur-erinda-Perum cheral-Irumporai. The Kongu country and Ganga nadu in which Tagadur was located came under the Irumporai Chera line, including, apart from the aforementioned Irumporai, Ilancheral Irumporai, Yanai-Katchei-Mandaram-cheral Irumporai, Perumkadungo, Ilam Kadungo (of the Pugaliyur Tamil-Brahmi record) and finally Kanaikkal Irumporai. Apparently from about the close of the 4th Century A.D., the region passed under the Chola overlordship under Kochchenganan, although it would seem that there could also be sporadic rule in this region by the chieftains of the Chengam area of North Arcot district, which is a contiguous territory. If the Andipatti Hoard of coins (in Madras Government Museum) is to be significantly interpreted, the Tinnan Etiran Chendan mentioned there in characters perhaps of the 3-4th Century A.D., should have had collateral control over the Dharamapuri or Adiyaman area also. After the so called Kalabhra interregnum, we find, however, Konganivarman Avinita and his son Durvinita get into the control of the entire Kongu country and held them seemingly till about the 6th Century A.D. and with a brief Bana interlude, the occupation came to an end during Sivamara I's reign, around A.D. 716. With the defeat of Paramesvaravarman Pallava at the hands of the Chalukya Prince Vikramaditya around A.D. 731 which heralded the interregnum in the Pallava line, followed by the ascent of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla as king, Banas who supported Chalukyas spread themselves in the region of Tagadur nadu, including Namakkal and Tiruchchengodu. A hero-stone from Irulapatti in Dharamapuri district refers to the Vinnavarman (of the Kadava line) who was apparently the same as Simhavinnavarman of the Chengam hero-stones, and some in Dharmapuri also. His brother was one Skandavarman and mother an Adiyakula princess. This Vinnavarman defeated the Bana king to redeem Tagadur nadu and made Adiyaman his subordinate. The Pandyan invasion under Arikesari Parankusa Maravarman saw the defeat and death of Skandavarman, as seen from the Velvikkudi Plates of Varaguna I (*Kurunattavar kulam-keduttum*). This might have been around the end of the second decade of the 8th Century A.D. and from then

Simhavinnavarman appears to have merged the Kadava and Adiya line to rule over the area and in about A.D. 751, he was succeeded by Mahendra, his grandson, also known as Gunasila, of whom we know from the Namakkal Vaishnavaite cave record. Apparently, both the cave-temples at Namakkal should have been that of Gunasila, or if Simhavinnavarman's name has any significance, the Narasimha cave could have been his and the Ranganatha cave (by its self-explanatory record) that of Gunasila and carved by the latter, the former's grandson. We are thus able to place the Namakkal caves clearly in the middle of the 8th Century A.D. and apparently also the several *birudas* or titles which are also engraved in the caves and on the hill about this Adiyaman king, The passing away of Gunasila (after whom incidentally, the village on the north bank of Kaveri near Musiri is also named where we have a famous temple notable for exorcising the devil out of the demented (and resting on an earlier plinth which is clearly of the Ganga style of construction and probably built by Adiyanatha Gunasila), heralded the clamping of Rashtrakuta and Kongani rule over the area, as shown by the reference to Ganga and Kongani in the hero-stone records at this stage. In the second decade of the 9th century A.D. Mahendra's (Gunasila) son Vijaya Narasimha came to control Tagadur nadu, extending it further upto Kolar to the north and Pennar to the east, ruling till the middle of the 9th century A.D., whereafter Nolamba Mahendradhiraja entered the scene and ousted the shortlived occupation of the tract by Banas under Vikramadityajayameru. His reign form A.D. 880 (till the advent of the Cholas around the A.D. 930 under Perantaka I) saw the establishment of the Nolamba culture and art in the region. The finest monument to this culture was the Siva temple at Dharamapuri, outside the town with its beautiful interior pillar carvings, door frames etc. The Chennaraya temple at Adiyamankottai and another close by are again in Nolamba style, though decidedly later to the Dharamapuri temple. The diagnostic element, apart from the pillar style and the *dikpala* grid ceiling was the introduction of a facade of two pillars in the junction between *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa*, in all their temples. Under Raja Raja and Rajendra the area merged completely into the Chola empire.

B. Epicentres and elan

Cultural movements and art movements do not have a linear development, as art does not conform to evolutionary patterns. However, art does flourish under circumstances of consistent patronage and continuous inspiration from both connoisseurs and creative art-guilds. Thus, centres which can keep the torch of artistic patronage ever burning over long spells tend to become epicentres of cultural movements whose ambit of influence, impact and diffusion steadily widen within their own limitations. Several such epicentres comparatively closely located create a regional *milieu* in art which sets the authentic idiom for art-guilds to emulate. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala, some of the most venerable and antique epicentres were Kanchipuram, Mahabalipuram, Tiruchchirappalli, Karur, Madurai, Tirunelveli and Trivandrum. The subsidiary or diffused secondary zones of art activity operated around Uttiramerur, Bahur, Thanjavur, Kumbakonam, Tiruttani, Tirumalai, Vijayamangalam, Narttamalai, Tirumayam, Kodumbalur, Ambasamudram, Korkai, Ukkirankottai and created artistic models that had not only become sources of reference for successive generations of craft-guilds, be they of the Pallava, Pandya, Chola or other political yoke, but also innovated century after century and kept itself fully posted with the religious developments of the land so as to relate art to religious need, in the first instance, quite apart from its own idealistic expression. It is no wonder that there is a great conformity in the idiom, style and modelling values in each major period, like the Pallavas and Pandyas in the cave-art phase between A.D. 580-800, to some extent cross-fertilized with Badami Chalukyan and Rashtrakuta *metier* and mannerisms. Similarly, in the unsystematised and modest - sized early structural art under the post - Mamalla stage of the Pallavas, the post-Varaguna I stage of the Pandyas and the pre-Parantaka stage of the Cholas (from A.D. 668-875), there was a greater growth of sculptures and temple elevational details than any uniform degree of new production of temples in every region, and this was due to the fact that the shift from the rock-medium to the structural suddenly, decelerated the growth of temples both in size and in number, but correspondingly proliferated sculptural and iconographic growth.

In epicentres, however, the development was kept up and even sometimes accentuated by return to softer media like sandstone or by a mixed style of stone and stucco as the case may be. It was indeed the network of the primary epicentres as well as the secondary centres of art-and craft-guilds that kept up the zeal in religious art. No doubt, the socio-economic regeneration of the rural areas, under the co-ordinated guidance and control of temple organisms kept the pace of artistic growth at an even keel, assisted significantly in this by both temple ritual schedules, by *agamic* texts systematised by this time and by the band of erudite religious leaders that integrated education and cultural training with temple management. It is indeed axiomatic that the patron, artist and the clergy were the triple crucial factors in this development. In the next stage, we are fortunate, in a historical sense, in the rise of the Imperial Cholas of the Vijayalaya line in the middle or the third quarter of the 9th Century A.D., which came into its own under Aditya I, after the significant victory of Aparajita Pallava against Pandyas in the Tiruppurambiam battle (in which Aditya was Aparajita's ally.). This paved the way for a unification or at least the systematisation and maximum diffusion of the potentialities of the epicentres and secondary centres of Cholamandalam, especially for religious art. We should deal with the political situation of this momentous period first before we do justice to the art situation and religion which this art essentially subserved.

The later Pallava line began with Nandivarman Pallavamalla who is credited with one of the longest reigns in history (A.D. 731-796)—for sixty-five long years which were eventful despite political difficulties, both for social advancement and artistic enrichment. His successors, Dantivarman and Nandivarman III were equally resourceful and enthusiastic patrons of art. With the end of Nandivarman III (after his Melur Tirukkoilur record of 13th-14th year) around *C.* A.D. 859 probably, there was some fragmentation of the empire variously under Nripatunga, Kampa and later under Aparajita. Until recently, historians were virtually undecided about the actual internal conditions of the empire and to the exact relationship of these three aforementioned Pallava princes. The reason was essenti-

ally that we see them largely occupying comparatively isolated spheres of operation and not crossing each other's path. Nripatunga was largely in full control of the eastern part of the empire, namely Chingleput, South Arcot and Thanjavur and probably a large part of Tiruchchi, Pudukkottai and Salem Districts, while certain western parts of Chingleput District, parts of Chittoor District and almost the whole of North Arcot District were under the control of Kampa. This would mean that Nripatunga who had an apparent legitimacy to the throne of Kanchi as the son of Rashtrakuta princess Sankha - the queen of Nandivarman III—had to contend with Kampa who might have been his half-brother through another of the queens of Nandivarman III, and this Kampavarman probably ruled from Uttiramerur, where his records are found in good number, but not at Kanchipuram. His records are profuse in various parts of North Arcot District, like Kaveripakkam, Kavantandalam, apart from Solapuram and Tiruvorriyur in South Arcot and Chingleput Districts also. Owing to the border areas occupied by Kampa and due to his own marital links with one of the Ganga princesses of Karnataka (to which queen, it would now appear from the recent Tiruttani Copper Plates of Aparajita that the latter was born), Kampa should have increased his strength, and apart from that, a parallel line of kings who were sometimes called as Ganga-Pallavas and whose inscriptions were found mostly in North Arcot District and Salam/Dharmapuri areas, might have been mainly a sequal to this bifurcation of the Pallava empire. This somewhat unsettled period saw the rise of Pandya Varaguna II (accession *C.* A.D. 862) to make bold ventures into the Kaveri delta seemingly with the very good relations that he kept with Nripatunga, to such an extent that for almost two decades, many of his records quoting his own regnal year are well inside the eastern part of the Pallava empire, as at Lalgudi, Tiruvellarai Javantinathapuram, Nemam, Tirukkodikka (all in Tiruchchi and Thanjavur Districts; Arasur, Tiruvadigai both in S. Arcot District) from the last two of which in his records, he quotes the 18th regnal year (equivalent to his own 16th regnal year) of Nripatunga in whose friendly realm he was sojourning then. This friendship was clearly looked askance by Aditya I who had been building up an empire in the Thanjavur District after

Vijayalaya had laid some firm foundations for it. Aditya espoused or received the friendship of Aparajita (who had some bones to pick with his dynastic rival Nripatunga) and Ganga Prithvipati, his contemporary, and this confederacy with a few other small chieftains on their side, effectively challenged Varaguna II at Tiruppurambiam after several initial skirmishes in Thanjavur - Tiruchchi area and decisively defeated him. The records of Nripatunga which are found in several parts of Chola delta region and the upland area of Pudukkottai as at Lalgudi, Tiruchennampundi (near Koviladi), Narttamalai, Kandiyur, Tirumukkudal, etc., mostly where Varaguna (whose ally he was, had his own records also) seemingly disappear from the time of the Tiruppurambiam battle which is fairly reasonably fixed by Prof K.A.N. Sastri around A.D. 885 or slightly earlier. Probably Kampavarman who is well-known in the North Arcot area through his records including that of later record where a temple under donation is called as Nandikampesvaram, (seemingly in confirmation of the fact that he is a son of Nandivarman III) is not also seen beyond A.D. 882. On the other hand, by the Tiruttani Virattanesvaram record of Nambi Appi, which is dated in the 18th year of Aparajita, read with Aditya's own victorious whirlwind campaigns into the Tondaimandalam where he quotes several dates in the area of Aparajita on the western periphery at Takkolam, Tirumalpuram, Ukkal, Nerkunram, Brahmadesam, Uttiramarur, etc., between his own 22nd and 27th years—which latter date from his Tirukkalukunram and Tillaisthanam records (*Tondainadu pavia Rajakesari*)—is seen that this is almost the completion of his aggrandisement of the Tondaimandalam to his empire and would show that Aparajita himself could be dated as a king largely after Tiruppurambiam battle with which he was definitely connected (or a little earlier) say between A.D. 882-885 and goes on upto 903 which is the last year coeval with the last 33rd year of Aditya. Correspondingly Kampa his father was before Tiruppurambiam battle and his reign according to the Uttiramerur record extended upto 22nd year and he was ruling the western part of Tamil Nadu from the time of Nripatunga (*C.* A.D. 859) to which if we add his latest regnal year known, we arrive at a date around the Tiruppurambiam battle by which time we know Aparajita had enlisted Aditya as his ally. Thus it tallies

and makes Kampavarman rule broadly between *C.* A.D. 858-882. By the decisive forces which had already set in from the close of Nandivarman III's reign, it became easy for Aditya to play the *divide et impera* policy between Nripatunga and Aparajita in the latter part of the former's reign, so that it could pay him dividends both in his policy towards Varaguna Pandya and in his ultimate aim of uprooting Pallava rule in Tondaimandalam and thus become the important master of much of Pandinadu or at least of the Pudukkottai area and the entire Tondaimandalam. In fact it could be surmised that even the tenuous links that Aditya's father Vijayalaya kept with North Arcot District where in an inscription from Kilputtur of the time of Vikrama Chola, mention of gift made in the fourth year of Vijayalaya (A.D. 871) is indicated. Between the period of the 7th year of Nripatunga *i.e.,* around *C.* A.D. 865 and the date of Aditya's accession namely, A.D. 871, Vijayalaya's four or five years of rule will have to be accomodated but his sorties in North Arcot District seemingly were intended to induce Kampa to become a Chola ally against Pandyas especially since Rashtrakutas were supporting Nripatunga (due to his links with them) and through him and others, the Pandyas also. In the sequel Aditya was able get this vital north-western border of Tamil Nadu sealed against Rashtrakuta intrusion though seemingly for only some decades as shown by the most devastating invasion of Rashtrakuta into the whole of Tamil Nadu during the reign of Parantaka in the forties of the 10th century A.D. and was able to consolidate the empire at least in the course of his reign.

Now we should turn to the cultural devolutions of the weakening Pallava empire after Nandivarman III. Nripatunga has his copper plates Bahur of (Pondicherry area) and at Chittoor (Arkonam Taluk of North Arcot District). This broadly indicates the sway of his writ while Kampa-Aparajita rule in North Arcot and Chittoor Districts are reflected in the temples at Kavantandalam, Uttiramerur, Tiruttani, Nenmeli, Takkolam, Tiruvorriyur, etc. By and large It is seen that Kampa-Aparajita area patronised temples which are hetrogeneous in their format and of mutually variant models and media, while the temples in Nripatunga's area which was the integral parent area of Tamil Nadu presented both conventional later Pallava as well as typical

Pandya-Pallava fusion elements. Both the types, however, were generally of modest proportions in size and stature, often of single storey. Both of them indicate that on the whole patronage has fallen on frugal days. There was also, correspondingly, virtually no outstanding activity under the Aditya banner in the period prior to his 15th regnal year and even in the subsequent years, it was the subsidiary vassel chieftains, either of the Paluvettarayar or Irukkuvel House that were expanding their patronage and were indeed introducing fresh improvements of the style. These, however, could hardly be shown as leading logically to the typical Chola models that we are so familiar with from the time of the aggressive days of Parantaka in the early 10th century A.D., and thus it can be surmised that the initiative and overpowering urge towards expanding creative idioms in architecture were existing in a modest key owing to the severe political stresses all around. Art of sculpture, however, was making steady strides since it was an individualistic effort. Conversely, after the Tiruppurambiam battle, there is a greater relaxation of this tension and creative structural art gains rapidly in momentum. By and large, one might, therefore, have to concede that the last quarter of the 9th century A.D. and the decades that precede it were essentially productive for the vassal chieftains and buffer elemants but not for the main contenders to the Tamil realm like the Pallavas, Pandyas and the Cholas. Here, if anywhere, was the matrix for the growth of subsidiary centres. even as the epicentres famished due to the political vicissitudes.

The 10th century A.D. for Tamil Nadu and Kerala especially, was a period of great sea-change. Politically, one might say that in the very first decade the transition from Aditya I to Parantaka was symptomatic of a new attacking spirit displayed to cash in on the events following Tiruppurambiam battle and the eclipse of the first Pandyan power from the Kaveri valley. By incessant expeditions leading to the sacking and conquest of Madurai and later ths northern Tamil speaking part of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) yielding Parantaka the title *Maduraiyum Ilamum Pandiyan mudittalaiyum konda* (he who captured Madurai, Ceylon and the crowned head of the Pandya), the Chola power was riding on the

crest of a wave of majestic achievements and effective build up of the empire which now virtually was spread over the entire Tamil Nadu with the extermination of both the Pallavas (by Aditya) and Pandyas (by Parantaka) who were not to rise again till the latter part of the 13th century A.D. There was indeed, therefore, an uneasy peace and the temporal activities of Parantaka were conducive to a fresh lease of life for art forms. Several revolutionary moves on the social plane are witnessed largely attendant on the intrepid and benevolent attitude of the king. The 14th year record at Uttiramerur refers to the election rules for voting by ballot by the eligible members of the *Sabha* of Uttaravedi Chaturvedimanglam for electing the officers for the six departments of the city Municipal Council. The whole tenor of the stipulated qualifications for the candidates indicates the fine balance that was kept between intellectual and administrative competence on the one hand and moral and ethical integrity on the other, thus vouching for the vigilant eye of the sovereign on the wholesome pursuit of administration by officials. Other inscriptions such as the one relating to a revision of land revenue and settlement survey, the king caused to be carried out in Tiruchchi District, attendant upon the devastating floods of river Kollidam and the destruction of fertile lands by sand, and the remission of revenue and the expansion of Viranarayanan Eri (tank) at the junction between Tiruchchi and South Arcot districts to divert the surplus water of Kollidam or Kaveri in future, would speak of the efficiency and a sense of humanity evinced by the sovereign towards afflicted citizens.

It is seen that the temple plan had retained mostly its pristine simplicity although the exterior walls of the temple are introducing new art-motifs such as the *kumbha-lata* or rose - water-sprinkler type of ornamentation in the recessed portions. It is rather interesting to see that notwithstanding a very large number of temple witnessed during the time of Parantaka and his successor Gandaraditya and the later massive renovations by his dowager queen Sembiyanmadevi, it is mainly from the time of Raja Raja that a new improvisation and standardisation begin in temple layout. Till then the famous lateral approaches to the *ardhamandapa* from the open courtyard around have not crystallised and either

the approach into the temple is from the axial end of the shrine or from one of the entrances generally let out on the southern wall of the *mahamandapa* mainly to proceed in a clock-wise direction for *pradakshina* circuit around the temple by the devotees. The typical Chola features occuring from the time of Raja Raja onward do not generally appear on the Pandyan soil, where there is a variant local idiom which continues even during the Chola occupation of the land. Some art-motifs of the Chola art and some plinth moulding forms, however, easily gain currency in Pandinadu as well. It is seen that the Pandyan country was restive during the Chola occupation and control of their land and besides Ceylonese kings generally supported Pandyas against the Cholas—of which the most outstanding example was Parakramabahu (A.D. 1153-1186) who spanned the reign of the two Chola kings Rajadhiraja II (A.D. 1163 - accession) and Kulottunga II (A.D. 1178-86) often attacking the main Cholamandalam in order to divest Pandyan country of their pressures. Thus we do have a prevailing Pallava model in the early to later Pallava times, a Pandyan model and a Chola model upto the time of Raja Raja and thereafter, we have a double model, respectively for northern Tamil Nadu, covering Tondaimandalam and Cholamandlam while Pandimandalam pursued generally its own main types, with several admixtures, where suitable, of the Chola art-motifs, idioms and elevational devices. We will have occasion to deal with these and certain outstanding diagnostic characters of the Pandyan architecture in the relevant section further down.

C. Temples and Society

Several guilds (*nigamas*) are seen existing in the early historic period covered by the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions especially around Madurai, as at Mangulam, where *Vellarai nigama* is mentioned and several merchants carrying trade in salt (*uppu vanikan*), sugar (*panita vanikan*), iron (*koluvanikan)*, cloth (*aruvai-vanikan*), gold (*Pon kolavan* and *Pon vanikan*), stone (*tacchan*), precious stones (*mani-vannakkan*), variously from Alagarmalai for the first five occupations, Pugaliyur for the sixth, Mamandur for the seventh and Araichalur for the eigth. We also note that these places are close either to Madurai, or to Karur or Kanchi, the three capital cities, tending to suggest their direct connections with the seats of

political power. Needless to say that the these merchant guilds who had directly been connected with the benefactions to the monks living in the natural caverns, in the form of roof, drip-ledge, stone-cut bed, etc., were also continuously interesting themselves in the work of temple arts. In fact, the stone mason (*tachchan*-which Tamil name is common to both carpenter and stone mason) had been an important figure and was the presiding *sthapati* in temple-building as well as for engraving records on copper plate charters especially. He has been honoured by references in several contexts. Every region or town had its outstanding master-mason, such as Kevada perun-tacchan in the vicinity of Mahabalipuram, Paramesvara perun-tachchan of Uttiramerur and Brahmamerayan of Thanjavur. Trade guilds which controlled the activities of artisans had been vast organisations with the status of quasi-independent corporations and had received privileges from the rulers and wielded considerable influence. The three outstanding among such guilds in ancient south India had been *Ayyavole, Manigramam* and *Chitrameli*, while the other merchant guilds had been *Nagram, Valanjiyar Kudirai chetti, Nanadesiya-tisai-yayirathi-ainnurruvar, Ainnurruvar, Anjuvannam*, etc. The *Manigramam* guilds, according to the Kottayam Plates of Sthanu Ravi and of Vira Raghava were functioning in the S.E. Asia also and in Siam and Ceylon as early as the 8th-9th century A.D. In Tamil Nadu, the *Ayyavole* five-hundred (who hail from Aihole-the great cradle of art in Karnataka) are refered to in the Muni-Sandai record in Pudukkottai District, in the 9th century A.D. (according to some scholars or early 10th according to many others) as members of the *nanadesi, paradesi* and *svadesi* groups, seemingly of international, external and internal wings.

In this context, it would also be useful to record the known examples of Tamil inscriptions outside the shores of India. The more important ones are : (1) the Takua-pa (Siam) record of A.D. 9th-10th century referring to one Nangurudayan, Avaninaranam tank, Manigramam trade guild and *senamukha* and *Munrukai - Mahesenai* (elsewhere seen in the Tiruvali-suaram inscription, Tirunelveli district) ; (2) the Pagan (Burma) Tamil record of 13th-14th century A.D. referring to Pukan alias Arimardanapuram and Nanadesi-Vinnagar-alvar Vishnu temple to which donations were made by traders

of Malaimandalam, and the reference to the sixth verse of Kulasekhara's '*Mukundamala*' at the beginning of the record; (3) the bilingual record in Fu Cian province of China at Chiuan-Chu (opposite Formosa or present day Taiwan) to the north of Hong Kong, discovered in 1956 and in two stone pieces, having a six-lined record of which five lines are in Tamil and the last in Chinese, dated in Saka 1203 (AD 1281) - on the Chitrapaurnami day when Tava Chakravartigal Sambandapperumal established a Siva temple in the name of Tirukkadalisvaramudaya nayanar, during the reign of the Chinese king Kublai-Khan, for the merit of his crown-prince Segazai Khan. A reference to the same person is noticed in the bilingual Bhubanesvar record, in Tamil and Oriya, of A.D. 1396 during Narasimha IV Gajapati's reign; and (4) the Lobal Tolwa (Baros region, Sumatra) Tamil record of Saka 1010 (AD 1088) of *Tisai* - 1500 guild.

The Chitrameli corporation is also similarly seen in eighteen towns on either bank of the Kaveri river. Piranmalai record mentions the members of the mercantile corporation from eighteen *pattinams*, thirty-two coastal cities, sixty-four agricultural assemblies and four quarters of the eighteen *vishayam*. The Chitrameli which exerted control over production and distribution of produce, originally formed the *vellalar* (agricultural) community of Tamil Nadu. It was engaged in import and export trade with *Manigramam* and *Nagaram*. Probably, on the basis of the earliest records of these, we might hold that they migrated from Karnataka. They were called the *Chitrameli Perianattar* and *meli* or plough symbolised their agricultural activities and this label was associated with rulers, chieftains, temples, villages and even dancing girls, attached to temples and with the names of gods in temples, suggesting how pervasive had been their patronage and range of responsibilities. They had their '*sasanas*' and one of the records extols these as showing that these corporations stand for the security of the *dharma* and *rashtra*, serving with generosity and good conduct and well-versed in the three great constituents of Tamil, namely literature, music and drama. They were considered as the scion of Vasudeva and Mulabhadra (Balarama), indicating the Bhagavata cult of Sankarshana and Vasudeva as having permeated into the agricultural base of the land. The *velirs* or *vellalas* who constituted this *Chitrameli* corporation were adepts in

six diverse occupations—agriculture, animal husbandry, trade, bead-making, smithy and service to twice-born. The Ays of the Venad area were also of the same group and were said to be belonging to Vrishnikula or the Yadava community, who were seemingly non-aryan . people who migrated to South from Saurashtra and Mathura. Plough-symbol which they adopted is even traced by some to Sumerian pictograms and Indus seals. The *idayar* (*manradi*) community of pastoral milkmen are also of the same group. There are hundreds of records of their great hold over the society and how they formed a bridge between the King and local society in the execution of the revenue transactions of the villages and benefactions of the temple. Together with the *Kalappalars*, they wielded great influence in the Chola local self-government policy and greatly helped in the decentralisation of power for religious and cultural activites of the realm under the Imperial Cholas.

Art was clearly a part of such an idyllic situation of plain living and high thinking by the royal and the lay. Some precious cameos of the architectural and art situation prevalent in these times is afforded by rare references to the edifices commemorating the passing away of some of the notable royal heads already in the Sangam lore.

Students of temple architecture are hard put in visualising structural forms of temple in very early times prior to the first known standing monuments, like the cave-art of the Pallavas and Pandyas in Tamil Nadu. It is, however, clear by both direct evidence like Mandagappattu record as well as indirect stylistic evidence that before temples of durable materials were erected, brick, mortar and timber were the media. One might also presume that no complicated character in layout or elevation could have been feasible then although some variety in presentation was quite likely. The most popular aspect of such a structure might be its open character, by which the major part of the layout of the interior even including the deity fixed in a central spot might be visible to the onlooker. Early northern textual evidence reveals that there were five basic shapes which were exploited for raising of structures and these were square and rectangle, ellipse and circle and octagon. Architectural evidence of the latter day fully corroborates the application of these shapes on plan and elevation, which ultimately got reduced

to three ; square, octagon and circle and were at the root of the ternary division of styles in the South in to respectively *Nagara, Dravida* and *Vesara* Orders.

We have in the early Tamil period, the anthologies of Sangam literature which reveal the current usages and models. Shrines were erected for gods as well as for dead warriors or departed royalty-although dedicated to god with whom the departed has merged. The *Pallippadai* temples, the hero-stone structures and the like are cases in point. Of these, considerable interest attaches to four references in *Purananuru*, wherein we are casually given the names of such edifices which were apparently raised over the mortal remains of four brave Pandyan kings of antiquity, namely, Nanmaran, Peruvaludi, Maran Valudi and another Nanmaran. The references are somewhat laconic but full of significance. Thus, we have the "*Chittira madattu tunjiya* Nanmaran (*Puram* 59) ; *Velliambalattu tunjiya* Peruvaludi (*Puram* 58) ; *Kudagarattu tunjia* maran Valudi (*Puram* 51 & 52); and *Ilavandikaipalli tunjiya* Nanmaran (*Puram* 196 & 198.) We might do well to study these quasi-technical terms and eke out a meaning consistent with their context, physical and architectural.

The first term *'Chittiramadattu'*, comprises two parts, *Chittira* and *madam*. The term *'Chittira'* has some specific connotation in architecture and sculpture. It means either free-standing or carved in the round or one decorated with ornamental motifs. We may well reject the last as secondary and inapt. The term should mean a *madam* which is free-standing or visible from all sides, and not raised back to back with a wall or surface. The term *madam* again connotes a raised structure, probably a chamber borne on pillars but most probably partially covered to ensure a certain degree of privacy. It will have some kinship with terms such as *'madakkoil'* The model thus would be not much unlike a small *mandapa* shrine. It might also just be possible that such edifices might not have had a tower above their roof and might have only a flat or sloping tiled roof for the structure.

The second term, *'Velli ambalam'* is in consonance with such well-known terms like *Ponnambalan, Chirrambalom*, etc; wherein the term *ambalam* is taken as the *'tadbhava'* of the sanskrit word *'ambara'* or firmament or circumference or covering. All the temples of

Kerala are called *'ambalam'* in malayalam. The word *'Velli'* should most probably stand for silver and the purport might be that the tomb of this Peruvaludi was having a canopy paved with silver tiles or sheets. We may recall the categorization of different *sabhas* of Nataraja and we may appreciate the appropriateness of the Pandyan's memorial having been paved with silver tiles or sheets.

The third term is by far the most clinching and of a chrono-technical kind. It stands for the specific type of *Vimana* of the southern order which is nearest to the northern curvilinear temples. A most convincing anologue of *kutagara* is the Draupadi Ratha at Mahabalipuram. This involves the technical terms *'kuta'* meaning a square structure with slopy quadrantal sides tapering to a low pyramidal top. It has the superficial resemblance to normal hut of grass or reeds with a square chamber. The explicit use of this term in this case would vouch for its currency. It could help us in visualizing that this Maran Valudi might have lived a little earlier than the 6th century A.D., perhaps around the 4-5th century A.D.

The last term (*Ilavandigaipalli tunjiya*) is somewhat piquant and out of the normal significance. The literal rendering of the term would be a younger (or made of *bombax malabaricum* wood or silk cotton material) fire-place or altar. The term *'andika'* in Sanskrit means a fire-place or even an altar. It is not known if this would suggest cremation of the crowned king. It may also mean a corruption of *Ilavandi* (as used in the term *'Ilavandikkappu'* ritual in temples) and could suggest that the king breathed his last in the dusk and was provided with a *pallippadai* shrine chamber at the place of his death and would lend a deliberate technical or architectural slant to the setting. These are four unique instances used for commemorative shrines of royalty in the Sangam period of Tamil history and would have a bearing on what follows in the region from the Pallava and early Pandyan times.

On the other hand, we have less specifically architectural but patently artistic and aesthetic descriptions of the outlook of people in other Sangam works. Fine arts were certainly pursued at that time as a worthy pre-occupation of the civilized citizen of

the city, town and even the village. *Nedunalvadai* of Nakkirar gives some delicate studies of paintings of figures, flowers and creepers on the walls, perhaps in an art gallery. Incidentally this reference states that the wall itself was as smooth and tough as if made of copper sheet (*Sembian nanna seruvuru nedunchuvar, uruvappalpu orukodi-valai ikkaruvodu periya kanbin nallie*). We have references in *Paripadal* of Nappannanar about the art gallery at Tirupparankunram where Rati, Rama, Indra as cat, Ahalya and Gautama were depicted. Uruthriankannanar of Kadiyalur refers to a brick and timber rafter scheme of temple which got damaged in its rafter, and the place which carried a fine painting of the deity became dilapidated and deserted, and *bali* offering was discontinued. In *Narrinai, Ahananuru* and *Nedunalvadai* several references exist to painted human figures as comparisons to the beauty of women, and to an unfilled but only outlined sketch of a woman. *Ahananuru* specially refers to '*suvarpavai*' or mural pictures and reliefs, while *Maduraikkanji* waxes eloquent over the figures or divinities who do not wink.

All these go so well with the situation which is graphically depicted with commendable brevity as well by Mahendra Pallava in his Mandagapattu record — *etadanishtakam adrumamalohama-sudham* — without brick, without timber, without metal and without stucco or mortar—that we do not have any *prima facie* difficulty in considering the Sangam age of the early centuries of the Chrishtan era as an immediately antecedent stage for him, and notwithstanding the chances of structures of such materials having been of a highly specialised nature in the previous centuries, their inperishability could not be vouchsafed and almost all of them had disappeared without a trace, requiring a person of the mettle of Mahendra to take up the challenge and improvise on the hardest rock known to Indian Art, not merely architectural forms whose essential features were the pillars, but also sculptural manifestations, both human and divine.

We had referred to the large scale movements of men from the North towards the South in the wake of the Mauryan Imperial thrust in the peninsula and the Satavahana watershed stage when communications and transport were probably the most widely established. It is in the wake of this that the Pallavas who were seemingly operating then in certain parts of Nellore and Guntur districts of the present Andhra Pradesh, made bold to widen the scope

of their political supremacy and by several stages found themselves in the closing part of the 5th century A.D. occupying the throne at Kanchipuram in Tondaimandlam of Tamil Nadu under the Simhavishnu line. It is difficult to say what impelled them to sweep into the northern Tamil country and to help themselves virtually with much of the territory that lay north of the Kaveri as their political domain. The times were certainly not propitious either for the Cholas or the Cheras who were both pushed back from their admittedly prestigious earlier ambit of cultural-political influence in large parts of the central and lower Kaveri and upper Kaveri and the Kongu territory respectively, into a residuary delta zone and Ponnani valley zone variously. Things were a shade more conducive for the Pandyas of Madurai who were able, not only to retain their kingdom of yore intact in the centuries following the Pallava advent, but were even able to raise a heroic, if to a degree rugged dynasty under Kadungon. The Velvikkudi grant of Jatila Parantaka Nedunchadayan alias Varaguna I (A.D. 770-815) is specific about the essential continuity of the Pandyan political throne notwithstanding the admittedly disruptive interval of the kingdom under the so-called Kalabhras—a seemingly non-religious and unorthodox counter-revolutionary movement which appears to have afficted a large part of Tamil Nadu between the 4th and the 6th century A.D. tending to portray this period as a political vacuum though not a cultural or commercial one. The little evidence that we have of the Kalabhra rulers like Achchutavikkanta, Pulli of Venkatam, etc., would seem to show that while opinions could differ on the final impact of this rather obscurantist phase in Tamil politics at this stage, these chieftains themselves were by no means *nominis umbrae* but men endowed with considerable enterprise and drive which they appear to have displayed for certain radically secular and seemingly economic gains. After the twilight of the Kalabhras, the fresh dawn in Tamil Nadu saw both Pallavas and the Pandyas well-established, with the latter extending their sway into the south Kerala zone, in the traditional A territory and for this purpose were essentially operating from two capitals virtually, Madurai the main one to the north and Nelveli or Tirunelveli in the south.

The Pallava empire, as we know continued in great glory, with a brief interregnum around A.D. 731 right upto the very end of the 9th century A.D., while the Pandyan empire did even

better to keep their flags aloft in their home zone till the first quarter of the 10th century A.D., notwithstanding the mortal blow received by them at Tiruppurambiam in the Chola soil, against a confederacy of the Cholas and the Pallavas helped by the Gangas on the side line, a blow from which they were not to recover till the fading of the Imperial Chola line of Vijayalaya in the mid-thirteenth century A.D. This again brought the second Pandyan empire under Jatavarman Sundara Pandya to sweep over the entire lower South, re-establishing their supremacy. Serving as buffers in the various pockets were chieftains like Muttarayars of Sendalai and Niyamam, Irukkuvels of Kodumbalur, Adiyamans of Dharmapuri (Tagadur) and the peripatetic Banas seen along the highway on the west. The history of Tamil Nadu between the 6th and the late 9th century A.D., was virtually the history of the Pallavas and Pandyas while the period from the early decades of the 10th century A.D., up to the mid-thirteenth century A.D., was the most resplendent history of the Imperial Chola empire, where village autonomy reached its highest peak, overlapping though with the most effective central control which left all loopholes in revenue administration securely plugged.

It is to be noted that the Pallava, Pandya and Chola empires, each in its own style and according to the rural situation, made sure that the revenue system of the land was stabilised in order that the financial resources could be augmented and religious services in the temples of the realm could be smoothly scheduled, through the donations for perpetual lamps (by adequate heads of cattle) and vedic and *sastraic* studies in colleges attached to temples run by the village assemblies for which whole lands of villages were sometimes earmarked. These are graphically revealed by the inscribed records of the kings engraved on the temple walls. The temples were themselves intended to be guarantors of the prosperity and ethics of the community and the divinities enshrined in the temples were seemingly accessible easily for all the members of the community and were an unquestioned and nautral divine arbitrators for all the temporal transactions of the community, silently watching its adherence as well as aberrations with a benevolent eye, and expecting both self-reproof and self improvement among the votaries. This was indeed what the religio-ethical literature like *Dharmasastras, Smriti*

texts, etc., expected to be imbibed by every civilized human being. While, therefore, there had certainly been both unwitting as well gross violations of the norms of rectitude, by the members of the village societies, in religious, personal as well material transactions, the temples which became the sanctified preserves where the village assembiy met often, took upon themselves the responsibility of shepherding the entire flock in the community and often enough, meeting them with condign punishment strictly in accordance with the letter and spirit of Hindu scriptural and ethical recommendations. The temples, therefore, came to be associated in the minds of the people, with inviolate sanctity, and oaths or public affirmation of loyalty, verity and integrity were often insisted on to be taken in the secred precincts of the temples, as this put fear of god into the minds, against the deliberate distortions of men of conduct and violations in the discharge of religious, secular, and public duties.

It is a patently observed fact that already in the layers of the Sangam classics, such socio-religious values had been underscored, thereby implying the influence of Vedic Brahmanical values in their societies and the respect that examplars who were championing such ideals had in the eyes of the common man. The advent of the Pallava rule under of Simhavishnu and the Pandyas of the Kadungon line well reflects the continuance of the virtues and values embodied in the organised society and their records, like the Vaigai-bed record of Sendan, more than passingly emphasise the standards of religion and ethics that were held out as worthy of being cherished and imbibed.

Two important religious strains observed well embedded in the matrix of the society were Pasupata saivism and Bhagavata vaishnavism that were found as the most dominant cults of divine worship. We know well that already in the Sangam literature, the physiographic division of the land into the hill, plateau, plain and littoral and dry tracts, invested each of these with certain presiding divinities such a Murugan or Karttikeya, Vishnu, Indra and Durga. A certain precedence of Murugan and Vishnu is also apparent in such a disposition of divinities. Vishnu and Siva come to be considered as two gods of equal power and superior to others, with the result that even later when the consolidation of the Hindu faiths which were six-fold then, on the basis of the aforementioned divinities with Ganesa

added, had to be brought about, introducing a nexus among them. Vishnu and Siva were placed on special and superior pedestal facing shrines. We will have an occasion to deal with this a little later, but early in the Pallava times, Vaishnavism and Saivism came into social and religious focus and circulation, consequent on certain movements which had started in upper India, around Krishna-Vasudeva on the one hand and Lakulisa-Pasupata, on the other. The evidence for these was well-entrenched in the Pallava period, alike in the hymnals of the early religious saints of Vaishnavism and Saivism, as in the literature fostered in the society. The royalty (e.g. Mahendravarman I) itself set notable trends in their commentaries on the then extent society (as in the *Mattavilasa-prahasana* where there are some pungent observations especially on Siva pasupatins). Although this would show more the depravity and desecrations of a few of its votaries in a particular stage or place, it would also imply that such religious pursuits had already earlier entered into the society. They, thus, provide interesting links with the diffusion of such cults in the other regions of southern and central India. The Bhagavata Vishnu cult however, took the developed from of the Panchavira tradition, that of the five notable Yadava or Vrishni heroes beginning with Krishna-Vasudeva and Sankarshana (Balarama), Aniruddha, Pradyumna and Satyaki, with a female scion also included in the form of Subhadra (the daughter of Balarama) and fused with Rukmini, in the Pallava realm. We are aware that Balarama is already refered to in the Sangam lore as the 'white' god, after the colour or complexion traditionally ascribed to him, as different from the grey or dark complexion of Krishna Vishnu. It is also seen that the period of the earliest Vaishnava saints (called the first three *Alvars*) falls within the early Pallava period (*C.* A.D. 500-700 and their hymnal called in *'Iyarpa'* on the basis of their prosodic difference and archaism from those of the main bulk of the *Divya prabandha* compilation, have a very significant and meaningful slant regarding the brand of Vaishnavism then most prevalent. The continuity of the Vaishnava tradition, through the later Pallava in and early Pandyan times into the early Chola period culminated and gave place to the Acharya or preceptorial tradition and ultimately climaxed in the advent of Ramanuja and his celebrated visishthadvaita doctrine and Bhakti platform, after which regular Pontifical tradition commences. We might do well to give an

integrated account of the entire Vaishnava movement and parenthetically the sectarian diversifications in the socio-cultural spheres of Saivism and Vaishnavism which ultimately result in regional and local customs and usages under denominational or local religious leadership. Further owing to the well permeated treatises and tracts on personal worship, temple ritual and puranic moorings of the divinity patterns, in the society and the mobility of propagandists and missionaries of these two religions all over the empire (not to mention the easy accessibility of northern usages also for constant contact and transfusion or variant developments) we have a fairly impressive literary, religious, artistic and cultural canvas in the century between the end of the 9th and the second half of the 13th century A.D. ushering the phenomenal growth of temples, temple arts and crafts, ritual diversities, festival calender, episcopal functions, etc. The involvement of functionaries in the administration of these temple institutions created vested interests often and gave rise to unseemly squabbles between Saivism and Vaishnavism and within either group as well. All the same, it saw the most integrated frame-work for the religious, secular, spiritual, administrative and moral functions of the temple organisation towards the society at large, and consolidated the institution into a service-minded *milieu*, fired by lofty ideals and ministering to the maladies of the masses and serving as effective tranquilizers for the stresses and strains to which politically the empire was subjected to, particularly with the impacts of renascent Jainism, Buddhism and the fresh threats for the advent of iconoclostic religions already on the air. These developments stood the region in good stead when (in *C.* A.D. 1250-1600), during the second Pandyan empire and subsequently during the Vijayanagara period, the attack on its institutions by militant and entrenched Islam of the north could be thwarted successfully and a unified bulwark could be built against the disintegration of the religio-cultural bearings of the society at large. But the strain was too great and the combined pressures from Islam and Christianity alike on the matrix of Hinduism, already torn and riven into a multitude of factions, was too much and creative religious art may be said to have come to virtual close by *C.* A.D. 1800 and only uninformed prototype imitations in art-forms for religion, to keep a semblance of the grand religious legacy of Hinduism is noticable.

While the spirit of catholicity and capacity for absorption and philosophic rationalism of Hinduism is ever present, ecclesiastic Hinduism declined rapidly and hieratic art was its permanent casualty.

D. Jaina trends

Tamil Nadu had been a haven and diffusionary destination for many impulses, political, commercial and cultural in the past and as a result of that the sociological matrix of the stage itself had become richer and varied.

One such important and early vanguard movement of the South was that of the burgeoning Jain creed, which in the early years of its adoption in its parent State of Bihar, was able to introduce a new outlook into the minds of kings and commoners (very much like its contemporary Buddhist creed) and was impelled by a sublimated missionary ardour to perigrinate into the distant corners of the land for self introspection, fraternal service and consolidation of the creed. History tells us that at some stage, the Jain religion by its organisation, zeal and political prestige came into serious conflict with the Hindu religion, spearheading into a clash with Saivite and Vaishnavite saints of Tamil Nadu (particularly the former), but the earlier period of the propagation of Jain way of life in Tamil Nadu had been significant for the shaping of the social philosophy of the indigenous Tamil speaking communities, resulting in a very honoured and crucial place for Jainism in the Tamil language and culture. This was to improve steadily notwithstanding the clashes on the religious plane, so that by the early medieval times, it was not possible to separate Hindu secular literature from the Jain owing to the fundamental and thoroughly harmonious nature of the contributions made by Jains in the region. Exemplars like Dharmasena (later Appar, the Saiva saint), Tiruvalluvar, the author of *Kural*, Ilango, the author of *Silappadikaram*, Pavanandi the author of *Nannul*, and the authors of *Tolkappiyam*, *Neminatham*, *Chudamani Nighantu*, *Perungadai*, etc., were all Jains who made fundamental contributions to the Tamil muse.

The earliest stage of such a new movement of the arrival of the mendicants mostly in sultry groups was caused by the

immigration under Bhadrabahu towards the close of the Mauryan period, most likely under Samprati Chandragupta's own initiative as the legends at Sravanabelagola in the Ganga country lead us to believe. The vestiges of such a movement in Tamil Nadu are to be seen in the several dozens of natural cave-shelters used by the Jain ascetics, with the smoothly polished beds and pillows cut in these shelters and the drip-ledge cut on the brow of the cavern roof to prevent water from receding into the inner parts of the shelters. It is significant that many of these clusters of caverns are located around the ancient capitals of the Tamil Kingdoms, as at Madurai, Tirunelveli, Uraiyur, Karur, etc. The occasional inscriptions engraved on the rock face, referring to the benefactions, as above, to the cave-shelters, mostly by tradesmen who had patronised these ascetics of Jainism, whose way of life and religious tenets appealed, as they did in the early years of its rise in Bihar itself, to their simple minds, much more than the complex ritual-oriented Hindu religion.

Since the Gangas of Talkad had been great and discerning patrons of the Jain religion right from the time they established their most important centre at Sravanabelagola, the advent of the religion into Tamil Nadu had been in two over-lapping trails, one across the south Mysore country, through North Arcot District into the heart of Tondaimandalam, developing into such prestigious centre as at Tirupparuttikunram or Jina Kanchi outside Kanchipuram the Pallava capital; and the other a natural convective movement from around each of the early cavern shelter-stages of the religion into the immediately contiguous areas, becoming more and more attuned to the local society in the process. By these twin movements, the material evidence for the growth of religious Jainism multiplied especially since the rich temple-building activities of the Hindu religion of Tamil Nadu on the one hand and the iconographic standardisation already getting consolidated in that religion were to be advantageously imitated and adapted to the Jain creed, and a common and affiliated pool of art and architectural traditions were to be accepted. Undoubtedly the Pandyan country saw the most widespread activity and cultural evidence for their religious creations in the form of cave-temples, paintings, *bas-reliefs*, loose sculptures etc. The Pudukkottai region of upper Kaveri

plateau, the Kongu area and the district of North Arcot were other important zones of its movement.

A list of monuments which are yielding evidence of this cultural activity in Tamil Nadu for Jainism, is given elsewhere, with the nature of the data shown against and the approximate period of its operation. Detailed studies are available on many of these in several publications contributed by scholars in the subject. It would be seen that (unlike Buddhism which notwithstanding its somewhat shortlived grandeur in the Pallava capital and elsewhere, was not striking root anywhere and in the process was getting completely wiped out in due course from the socio-cultural scene of Tamil Nadu), Jainism had fully merged itself with the lifestream of the Tamils and became a vital part of it.

In the realms of art, it left very majestic and extensive evidence of the intricacies of its iconographic trends, as the monuments at Sittannavasal, Jina Kanchi, Tirumalai, Kalugumaiai, etc., testify. On the architectural side, however, there was a practically common grammer and usage, falling within what could be adequately called as the southern *Vimana* Order. However, as in other parts of India, ancient and medieval temples of Jainism were externally plain while their interior is much more artistic and with iconographic enrichment. Further as the southern Jain order was of the *Digambara* type, there is also a prevailing austerity and simplicity about its basic outlook and ritual range. Hence, the images in worship centre around the *Tirthankaras* and their *Yakshis*, mainly, and the various centres of Jainism in the interior, especially those which have rock-cut vestiges, are in the form of *bas-relief* figures, and stereotyped representations of the *Tirthankaras* seated on a *simhasana* with a *prabhavali* crested by *tri-chattra* and flanking them, behind the balustraded seat, are found the *chauri*-bearers.

The early centres are especially noted for the mural paintings of themes like the *Samavasarana* lake, etc., and displayed excellent examples of the variants of the true *fresco* process, which seems to have developed mainly in the south, the first faltering transitional phase, however, being, notable at Ellora, making a departure, though not yet competently, from the *'tempera'* method of mural paintings, as exemplified by the magnificent Ajanta

paintings. It should be recorded here that irrespective of the artistic grandeur and excellence of the Ajanta painted panels, the southern paintings including the Jain mural examples (found in most of their temples) are technically superior, longer-lasting and more competent in their execution. The highest water-mark of efficiency in this true *fresco* method, however, was displayed in the Imperial Chola art of the Brihadisvara temple at Thanjavur, in the ambulatory around the main sanctum.

The advent of casting metal images for religious purposes in temples and elsewhere introduced a new dimension in the art-expression of icons in Tamil Nadu especially, as these were to proliferate into a rich legacy in the Chola and later periods. It is seen that the period prior to the 9th century A.D. did not see much of this activity that might be worthy of mention, even if it were to be claimed that a certain assortment of less than medium and often positively diminutive versions of figures for worship had been created in the later Pallava period. In so far as Jainism is concerned, it is seen that they had coevally been involved in such ventures in the Chola country and thus, almost the earliest Jaina bronze in Tamil Nadu is not only likely to be found only in Chola-mandalam, but also from almost around the middle of the 9th century A.D.. The area around Nagapattinam and Kaveripattinam apparently patronised the largest enterprise for Jainism and Buddhism respectively, as the *cache* of bronzes found from the former and published and now available with the Madras Government Museum and the beautiful Maitreya Buddha (with gilding also) found from the latter place and also kept now in the same Museum, would show. The area around Mannargudi town, and villages not far from it, like Dipangudi, still nurture a good number of Jain temples, and have a fairly large collection of Jain ¡bronzes of various periods upto the late medieval times. Among these, some excellent early Chola examples, as that of Rishabhanatha or Adisvara bronze of medium to small size at Mannargudi would be worthy of mention. The style is ostensibly the Chola idiom of the late 9th or early century A.D. but has been hampered to some extent by the essential nudity of the figure, restricting the scope for stylistic assertions only to the face. Some later Chola and Vijaya-nagara bronzes also exist in this temple. The late periods can claim

better collections also from Venkunram, Piridiyur, and Tirupparuttikunram especially since the Vijayanagara empire right from its foundation and under its early kings was an equal patron of Hinduism and Jainism as the coeval temples of Ganigitti Jinalaya at Hampi and the Sangita mandapa with mural paintings at the Vardhamana temple at Tirupparuttikunram, both by Irugappa, the General of Bukka Raya, son of Harihara II around A.D. 1382 and 1385 respectively would prove. Unlike the impressive *Chaumukha* and *Chauvisis* of the Deccan, the southern Jaina temples do not have massive subsidiary shrine creations, but there are separate *Chaturmukha bastis* and bronze or brass versions of the 24-*Tirthankaras* and other ritual items representing the *Pancha-parameshtis*, the *arhats*, *siddhas*, *acharyas*, *upadhyayas* and *sadhus*, which is part of the credal benediction of the religion. Further, consistent with the practice followed in Hindu temples, it is also customary in Tamil Nadu Jain temples to have the *puja* conducted only by the *Pujari* in the sanctum, and not by the devotee himself as and when he desires so. Burning camphor and ringing of bells are also concomittant practices usual in this area.

Considering the fact that right from the centuries prior to the Christian era down to modern times, a great community of Jains, both in religious and trading groups, had been inhabiting Tamil Nadu, in special concentrations around Kanchi, in North Arcot District, in Thanjavur, around Vijayamangalam, around Madurai, and Kanyakumari would show how Jain religious activities, notwithstanding their traditions as recorded in the *Sri Purana*, had become an inseparable part, stylistically and architecturally speaking, of the legacy of Hinduism making Tamil Nadu entitled to the claim of having truly provided a hospitable soil for the teachings of Mahavira. The *Perumpallis* or big monasteries of Jains in Tamil country are several, as known from the records. The Gandaraditya Perumpalli, at Palli Chandai, the Narpattennayira Perumpalli at Tirunarungondai, the Valuvamoli Perumpalli at Tondur, the Sri Karana Palli at Siruvakkam, the Jinagiripalli at Anandamangalam, Virasekhara Perumpalli at Salukki, Ravikulasundarapperumpalli at Perumandur, Ainnurruvar-Perumpalli at Chettipatti, the Vada Tiruppalli and Ten Tiruppalli at Narttamalai, Perunarkilli Cholaperumpalli at Sadayapparai, and the Virasangata Perumpalli at Vijayamangalam are only a few among these.

E. Buddhist trends

It is seen that Buddhism had a firm root in the Pallava realm at Kanchi during the time of Mahendra and is also independently attested to by Hiuen Tsang. But it is, at the same time, not part of running current of the early history of Tamil Nadu. The hymns of Appar, Gnanasambandar and Sundaramurti, the *Devaram* trio, and Tirumangai among the Vaishnavite *alvars* have references to Buddhists and their practices and doctrines, often sneeringly; the range of time being the 7th-8th century A.D. The oft cited role of Manikkavasagar, the *Tiruvachakam* author, as the opponent of Buddhism occurs at a slightly later period when during the time of Raja Raja and Rajendra there appears to have been a recrudescence of Buddhist advocacy and monuments—a period during the early part of which it is safe to put Manikkavasagar. These disputations between Ceylonese, Buddhists and Manikkavasagar are already part of *Tiruvachakam*. The |*Tiruvilayadalpuranam* dealing with the sacred sports of Siva, by Perumbarrapuliyur Nambi (ch. 30, V. 51) is perhaps the earliest literary reference to the dispute. The *Periapuranam*, the great anthology of the lives of Saiva saints written by the Chola Minister of Kulottunga II, Sekkilar, by the 12th century A.D., however, does not refer to the disputation or to Manikkavasagar himself, and his reliance on Sundaramurti's *Tiruttondattogai* for the traditions is one of the chief planks on which the *Devaram* trio have to be separated and antedated from Manikkavasagar. Sundaramurti's references to Buddhists are more valuable and specific, such as *Therar, Sakkiyar*, etc., and one such reference (V. 10 of the hymns on Tiruvalkoliputtur) even adduces to the sitting posture, during eating, adopted by Buddhists and standing posture as adopted by the Jains. The matter of outstanding interest, however, is the fact that both in Sambandar's references to Buddhists and those of others we are clearly given the impression that these are of the *Theravada* school of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and if so, it could be seen that unlike Jainism that had come from the north in its *Digambara* traditions and had directly settled down sufficiently early in different parts of Tamil Nadu Buddhism apparently did not move in from the north and at least did not penetrate south of Kanchi in Tondaimandlam but had recocheted from Ceylon (where it was received direct from upper India by sea) into lower Tamil Nadu after the 5th century A.D., and

it had a rather rootless existence here for a while in the 7th-9th century A.D. This would introduce a further dichotomy between northern and southern Tamil Nadu in the patronage of Buddhism and show that *Mahayana* Buddhism had never struck root in the lower Tamil Country, in the same manner as only *Digambara* school of ancient Jainism alone flourished in the south and particularly in Tamil Nadu and no trace even of the *Svetambara* school.

Sambandar's hymns speak of the dress, mode life, doctrines, their denial of the Vedas and the efficacy of sacrifice and their allegiences to the *Bodhi* tree and *Tripitaka*. Sekkilar's *Peria-puranam* in the Sambandar Puranam (verses 896-926) gives a most valuable account of Buddhist settlement at Bodhimangai between Telichchheri and Tirukkadayur in Thanjavur District. Possibly it is the same as Bodhimangalam near Tiruvidaikali in Mayavaram taluk from where Buddhist images had been recorded in the past. It appears to have been an exclusive colony of Buddhists.

As far as architectural traditions are concerned, it is becoming abundantly clear from the evidence brought out by recent archaeological excavations at Kaveripattinam (Pumpuhar) in Thanjavur District that Buddhist monastic traditions were to some extent common with those noticed in such impressive array in lower Deccan and Andhra Pradesh. *Viharas* comprised elongated wings each containing several cells with a common verandah for each wing and with the area well-enclosed by boundary walls. The wings led into a courtyard where the shrine unit was located. However, it is not clear that there was any typical *Chaitya* temple with either the replica *stupa* or a statue of Buddha inside as was common in Andhra Pradesh in the *Hinayana* and *Mahayana* stages respectively in most of the monasteries, nor was there any massive *stupa* which constituted the chief monument of reverence in the monastery. There was, therefore, a modification of the traditions to suit the region and the developing trends. We seem to have apart from the *Theravada* school of Sri Lanka, as seen above, which constituted the major concentration in most parts of Chola and Pandya countries, some *Mahayana* trends also. Bronze images of the Buddha in miniature were seemingly used by monks in their cells, besides a *Buddhapada* pair in typical Palnad limestone,

with auspicious symbols carved on the feet and with the four important events of Buddha's life ending with *stupa* worship (in *Hinayana* style) and with a small socket pit between the feet for holy relics, as in the case of southern Andhra *Buddhapadas*, which was found on the site.

The main worship temple was itself of a unique early brick tradition, and in plan it comprised an outer wall and a division of the layout into two parts, the entrance and the main structure. The entrance chamber was probably separated from the main temple, though interconnected. The entire architecture was of brick and stucco, but granite pillars appear to have been partly used in some sections of the structure, thus making them of a stage *after* the Pallava structural stage but well *before* the typical totally granite structural temples of Pandya and Muttarayar experimentations started in early 9th century A.D. The temple was having a lofty plinth of brick which went deep in its foundations into the subsoil which, at Kaveripattinam, was the fluviatile sand of the Kaveri estuary. The plinth was moulded in *jagati*, *padma*, etc. There was a basal terrace and from there the upper terraces of the temple were led by double flights of steps leading opposite to each other in 'L' shaped rise ; a pair of such opposed flights of steps symmetrically placed on each side. The corners were seemingly decorated by square shaped *kuta*-like towers isolated from the main temple, highlighting the storeyed division. Consistent with the brick tradition, there was a shaft-well, hollow in nature, below the central main temple foundations, the paired stairways and the corner towers. It is not known how high or to what storeyed rise the temple rose, but it could not be less than two or three storeys height, as was not uncommon in Hindu stone and brick architecture of the age. The nature of some of the numerals engraved on the stone pillars used, the nature of the stucco heads of *vyalas* and *dvarapalas* as found in the site lead one to surmise that the age of the temple was perhaps of the 6th century A.D. or a little later. The basal plinth had an essential *triratha* projection and in general appearance was not unlike the Gupta temples of brick of the 5th-6th century A.D. in U.P., Rajasthan and Bihar, excepting for the variation in the founda-

tional devices and building techniques and heavy use of stucco plaster. This was certainly a stage consistent with the growing brick tradition in the delta Chola country which continued for long there for Hindu temple erection and witnessed at Kaveri-pattinam itself in the Sambapati Amman temple datable, at its earliest stage, perhaps to the 10th-11th century A.D. with additions upto the 12th century A.D. It was also the period when the well-known Chudamani padma Vihara at Naga-pattinam was erected in honour of his father by the overseas patron Mara Vijayottunga Varma, a Sri Vijaya royal contemporary of Raja Raja I and had been duly honoured by Raja Raja himself with sufficient donations as seen from the Anaimangalam Plates of Rajendra I, his son. This structure in various modifications, is said to have stood in colossal brick compoaition, though in ruins, even till the 19th century when the Jesuit missionaries operating in coastal Thanjavur had demolished it to give way to their own erections. Buddhism thus had its entrenched activity mostly in Thanjavur District and was responsible for some choice productions in bronze also, as seen from the Nagapattinam bronze hoard of early to late Chola range. While its art potential was part of a common pool of Tamil art in the early Chola period, it was not sufficiently strong to make any wide dent in the spiritual life of the people and disappeared completely from Tamil Nadu after the 12th-13th century A.D.

Buddhist vestiges in Kerala are at present confined to the images of the Buddha generally dated between 7th-9th century A.D. recorded from Kurumadi, Mavelikara, Bharanikavu and Palli-kkal in the Alleppey and Quilon Districts of the State, not to mention the Buddha of Marudur Kulangara near Trivandrum taken to be in the Ceylonese art tradition of the 8th century A.D. The oft repeated references to Sri Mula vasa monastery, standing for Tirumulapadam is referred to in the Paliam Plates of the Ay King Vikramaditya Varaguna (*C.* A.D. 885-925; and also mentioned in the later record of Mushikavamsa epic) and the image of Bodhi-sattva Lokanatha from which monastary has a representation preserved in the 11th century in the Cambridge University Manuscript have no traces of the relics available now. Buddhism

was comparatively on a low key in Kerala, in relation to Jainsm and of course Vedic Brahmanism was the dominant socio-religious movement. The Jaina monuments at Chitaral (Tirucharanattumalai of the erstwhile Travancore State and now in the Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu) are datable to the above mentioned Ay king's time. The natural rock cavern at Kallil near Perumbavur is perhaps datable to the Kerala cave art tradition in its Mahavira image. The Sakkiyar Bhagavati structural shrine ruins at Godapuram, near Palghat, not far from Alattur had produced some sculptures of Mahavira and Parsvanatha, now in Trichur Museum. The ruined Jaina basti at Sultan Battery of the medieval times, more akin to similar temples from coastal South Kanara completes the list.

F. Sivite trends

Saivism in Tamil Nadu went through several stages of transformation and these developments constitute a fascinating study inasmuch as they reveal a 'great amount of assimilation of the Pan-Indian ethos evinced by the Tamil *elite* and laiety. As can be seen from the Sangam literature itself, we find that Siva, though not a very popular deity was quite well-known but we might concede that the advent of Saivism was largely the result of the spread of Pasupata saivism from the north which was already prevalent in the Pallava empire by the close of 6th century A.D., if not earlier.

The representation of Siva in a formless and yet formal stage (*arupa-rupa*) as a *linga* has been of fundamental importance to Saivaite rituals and iconography. It is often held, though not acceptably, that this *linga* form represents the male potential and should have had a direct relationship with the *Sisnadeva* mentioned in Vedic literature, as the god of the *Dasyus*. But the powerful, intellectual and social impact in the Upanishadic period on the tribes and groups, originally frowned upon by the Vedic communities resulted in their absorption into the devolved Vedic matrix. The result of this devolution is seen in the reinstatement of many gods, ideas, practices and rites into the Brahmanic society and indeed even the perception of new merits and

values in these revived notions. One such is undoubtedly Siva who was not known during the Vedic period except as Rudra or Pasupati. When the depolarisation mentioned above took place between the orthodox sections of which Indra was the chief god and the unorthodox sections of which Rudra (and in different values Krishna also was) a chief divine representative, Vedic concepts like *Skambha* also came to be attached to the later Siva. Siva came to be represented as Sthanu-Isvara, by the *linga* and a further amalgamation of the philosophic aspects of the *linga-lingin* symbolism (as constituting the *Purusha* and *Prakriti* of the *Sankhyas*) was also made with the re-established Rudra-Agni-Skambha equation. The subsequent texts tend to extol the inextricable nature and of the conjoined Siva-Sakti aspect which produced not only *ananda* of the world but also the resurgence of the universe by the procreative role of such a symbolism. While iconographically this took the form of Ardhanari, Harihara and Somaskanda forms, the *arupa* manifestations took a greater number of stages, through the Mahesa cult to the full formless *linga* cult. Lakulisa was the first to initiate such a form. He is taken as a substantiation of Siva in this world and was characterised by a cross-legged *Yogi* figure with a *lakuta* or short club in the left hand and a *matulunga* fruit in the right and with his *membrum virile* emphasised. He is also shown as seated back to back with a *linga* in the northern examples from Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The site of Karvan (Kayavarohana) in Gujarat is taken as his birth place. The most outstanding centre where the *Yogisvara* or *Mahayogi* tradition represented by Lakulisa was established was at Eklingji in Rajasthan. There is no doubt that this was the germ of the Dakshinamurti icon of the Tamil country. In fact, Lakulisa had also four disciples, seated cross-legged and is to be shown on the southern wall of temples in the central niche in much the same way as Dakshinamurti is to be shown. In the south, the *linga* form of Siva was not merely identified with *Sthanu* but also with the entire created universe and epitomised in the five vital elements of the universe, *prithvi* (earth), *ap* (water), *Tejas* (fire), *vayu* (wind) and *akasa* (ether). It was the Lakulisa-Pasupata cult that was the first to transform a mere idolisation of Siva into a

pointedly cult-oriented sect. This shows how while the Siva linga cult, as in the Chalukya (both Western and Eastern wings) and Pandya centres of the early period do not show any gradual perfection of the *Sivatattva*, the Pasupata-Lakulisa sect as entrenched in Kanchi where it reached in the 5th century A.D., apparently in the wake of Samudragupta's southern compaign developed first of all an iconic variant of the *Siva-tattva* in the form of Somaskanda, and then in the form of *Dhara linga* which is a multifaceted *linga* without *pitha* and in Dakshinamurti the *Yogi cum* teacher that he became, and in the form of the Lingodbhava or pillar of fire that Agni-Rudra was. In this process it even sported a *linga-lingin* relationship. This took the shape of Siva carrying a *linga* on his own shoulders. Initially, this was prevalent in the 4th-5th century A.D. in the Bhara Siva Naga dynasty at Padmavati (Pawaya) in Madhya Pradesh whose glory was repeatedly extolled in the Vakataka inscription as having pleased Siva by the continous carrying of heavy *linga* on their shoulders. This cult practice of Bhara Sivas (the weight bearing Siva) had been represented in several places in art, such as Kailasa monolith, Ellora, where seven such examples exist, at the Virupaksha temple, Pattadakkal in Karnataka, at Aihole in the ceiling panel (now in the Prince of Wales Museum) and all these range in date from A.D. 600-750. *Linga Purana* avers that *Pradana* or nature is the *linga* and Paramesvara is the *lingin* or the sustainer of nature. This *linga dhara* or Bhara-Siva form is seen at several places in Tamil Nadu whereever the Pasupata cult had dispersed. It is seen in the Muktesvara temple (also known as Dharma-Mahadevisvara, after a queen of Nandivarman II who built this temple) where on the left wall of the *Mahamandapa* Siva is shown in Kailasa with his *parivara*, carrying in his upper left arm a *linga* supported on the shoulder. This is further seen at Kilayur Agastisvara temple (Tiruchchi District) and at Muvarkoil, Kodumbalur, Pudukkottai, an avowedly Pasupata Mahesvara centre, as emphasised by its foundation record of Bhuti Vikrama Kesari. A Mahesvara *acharya* called Rudracharya had also formulated the *Svara* notations for the famous Kudumiyamalai musical record of the Pandyan times (late 7th century or early *C.* 8th A.D.) The entire Pandyan country had been full of such Lakulisa Pasupata or Mahesvara ascetics, Lakulisa icon itself is found at Arittapatti cave-temple near Madurai and Devarmalai cave-temple in Puduk-

kottai District. There is no doubt that in the Pallava region it was initially deep-rooted. Even in the cave-temple stages, we find that there are several experimentations with the *Siva-tattva*, in an esoteric manner, harmonising the Ekamurti-Trinity component, Mahesa-Ashtamurti and throughout Somaskanda was a common factor. Out of the 28 cave-temple specimens in the Pallava kingdom, we have five showing only single cell in the sanctum, clearly otherwise intended for Siva, six of the triple cell of which four are for Trinity combination and two indeterminate, two of seven cells perhaps related to the Ashtamurti nexus and one of the nine cell arrangement, probably the *ashtaparivara* group. A great majority of the Pandyan cave-temples are further affiliated to Saivism and only a minority to Vaishnavism while in the Pallava realm, there were 8 out of the 28 affiliated to Vaishnavism.

We find that this Siva-Mahesvara concept, which gave rise to the Dakshinamurti cult and that of the Lingodbhava icon, disappeared after the growing popularity of these two giving place to the equality of Siva and Vishnu and the recession of Brahma as an important factor and relegation to a subsidiary status, comparable with Surya; Karttikeya, Ganesa and Durga, together forming the *Shanmata* or six fold divinities for worship.

Beyond this stage of equal status for Siva and Vishnu, in the 7th-8th century A.D., one sees the development of the *Parivara* shrines separately for Siva and Vishnu where Durga, Ganesa, Surya, Karttikeya and the Saptamatrikas and even Jyestha, the Goddess of ill-luck were constituent and subservient parts until they (excluding Jyestha and the Saptamatrikas) became important on their own count (*svayam pradhana*) with separate independent temples for them. The presence of the Durga cult throughout in a benevolent form as a goddess with distinctive nexus to her source of origin—Vishnu (she is called Narayani or Vishnu Maya)—and is standing on the decapitated head of Mahisha demon is a type different from the Durga worship in the northern part of India and even in the Deccan. The nexus of Vishnu as Anantasayi and Durga, created out of the power of all gods for quelling Mahishasura, Sumba, Nisumba, Chanda and Munda, the several demons she killed is a permanent feature of southern iconic presentation in

early times. By this wherever, we have an Anantasayi icon, especially in rock art, we have a Durga panel also near by e.g., at Mahishamardini Mandapa, Mahabalipuram, Singavaram, Tiruttangal, etc., The later Chola period, with its wide contacts with upper and lower Deccan introduces many aspects of Durga as Kali and Vakra Kali, but placed her either outside the village, in the northern direction or outside the main complex of temples e.g., as at Gangaikondacholapuram and Tiruvakkarai.

Having established the *trigunatmaka linga* (with its Brahma Vishnu and Siva parts of square, octagonal and circular cross sections) and the Yoga Dakshinamurti, the genius of Tamil Nadu further cross-fertilized the Puranic lore and the philosophic adumbrations afoot, to evolve *panchikritya* and its mystic symbol, the *Ananda tandava*, out of the several forms of dance of Siva, producing thus the most satisfying and harmonious synthesis of the essence of Hindu religious heritage on the Saiva side. The appropriate socio-political context for this occurred in the impact that the *pratyabhigna* school of Kashmir Saivism had on Tamil ethos. For the former, the *Ananda tandava* has the very essence of the *panchikritya* cycle of the universe, namely creation, preservation, destruction, throwing a veil of illusion and benediction. Such a school of thought whose votaries came to live in the area close to Chidambaram gave the fillip to the concept integrating itself with Tamil ritual matrix. While, however, the *Pratyabhignas* were iconoclasts and believed only in meditation, the southern Tamil religious ethos which revelled in *utsavabheres* and other bronze images saw in the *panchikriya* concept of *Ananda tandava* a perfect formal balance, if translated into an image. The main creation, therefore, took place during the time of Parantaka before whose time we do not have any authentic *Ananda tandava* Nataraja figure—and grows steadily in the art of music, dance and drama inspired by Bharata's *Natyasastra* and its annotation by Abhinavagupta; and we have Nataraja occupying a specific south oriented place in every Siva temple of Tamil Nadu. The socio-cultural adherants to the Nataraja cult were the successors to the *Pratyabhigna* pontiffs, who caught the masses in the next century under Meykandar and Umapati Sivacharya, author of the *Sivagnanabodham*, the corner stone of *Saiva Siddhanta*, and we see the polarisation of the

Agamic Saiva cult into two parts, those controlled by learned Brahmanical *elite* and the other by folk or mass media or the *Saiva Siddhanta* which was adopted by the masses. These latter came to be called *Saivas*, as distinguished from the *Smartas*, as the learned brahmanical sivaite class was called. The pontiffs of *Saiva Siddhanta* who were all from the non-brahmanical stock and who held the masses in their sway by their own doctrine polarised Siva cult worship into their own distinctive channel, and the *agama* based temples, comparativelv speaking famished thereafter, especially in the late and post-Chola period. To off set this, the temple had to elaborate its ritual calender of festivals round the year, to associate the masses with the worship-schedules in temples, and for this erected several newer *mandapas*, cloisters, halls, sub-shrines, etc., highlighted by the *gopuram* towers at the cardinal points. After a certain stage, the *Saiva Siddhanta* through well established *Mathas* controlled all institutions with mass support took over the *Agamic* controlled temples also and made the *Agamic* ritual subservient to their social ethos and the clerical community who were the guardians of the *Agamic* ritual had to be at their behest and the iconographic symbolisation of the divinities lost their special appeal to the masses. It is in the Vijayanagara and Nayak times, that a partial restoration of the values and the importance of temple management as the hub of the village is once again realised and the fine arts associated with temples receive a new direction, *elan* and social purpose.

G. Vishnuite trends

Iconographically speaking, we have an early Bhagavata-Vishnu tradition in the 2nd-1st centuary B.C. largely centering around the Vrishni heroes, apotheosised, as Vasudeva, Sankarashana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Satyaki, with the female counterpart supplied by Subhadra, invariably shown in concomittance. While this flourished in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, as at Nagarī, Bhilsa, etc., we have no examples of these in Tamil Nadu proper. But this very cult enters Tamil Nadu just prior to the time *agamic* mandates started diffusing there around the 8th-9th century A.D., and thereafter, preceded by a stage when the triune, composite or co-ordinated concept of the Trinity, or the variation of their integration in the form of Hari-hara or Nara-Narayana pre-

vailed, and the Vaishnavism of the region thus was to a great extent non-sectarian and non-polemical. The early *alvars* themselves came under such a spell, and their *Iyarpas* and hymnal fully bear this out. The monuments at Mahabalipuram and Kanchipuram with their sculptural wealth also substantiate this stage. There was, however, one myth that had prevailed with considerable popularity, if the persistent provenance of its sculptural representation has any meaning—and this is the Anantasayi or Narayana-myth of creation. It is significant that such a sculpture is invariably accompanied, in reasonably close proximity to it, by the Durga-Mahishamardini sculpture, thereby attesting to the close affiliation of both these themes, as has been exemplified in the *Devi Mahatmya* texts of the *Markandeya Purana*. Durga is called Narayani or Vishnu-Maya, and a whole series of cult proliferations diffuse out of this basic concept.

The Hari-hara or Nara-Narayana aspect, both literally as well as metaphorically, is also, to be seen in the Siva-Vishnu proximity as at the Shore Temple, and in the Arjuna's Penance panel where Siva as the Pasupatadana-Murti with penancing Arjuna in the upper register, and seated Arjuna in front of the Vishnu in shrine in the lower register are depicted at Mahabalipuram.

The Trinity aspect, of course, had been the very *piece-de-resistance* of the early Pallava religious themes, the three gods invariably shown in close proximity as a concomittant formula, the examples of which are too numerous at Mahabalipuram and elsewhere to mention individually. The incarnations of Vishnu—another early theme of the Puranic times, also entered the Tamil country in the early Pallava period. It is to be noted that the *avataras* of Varaha, Narasimha and Trivikrama were Vedic and post-Vedic in origin and were already the common heirloom of of the Chalukya-Pallava forebears and they lay at the root another triune Vishnu form prevalent in the north, called Vaikuntha there. It was the expansion of the Vishnu-Purusha equation to its logical consequence, in the *Trigunatmaka-Divya-svarupa* form of god which later develops into the *Shadgunya* matrix in the *agama* stages. On the side of Saivism also, the *partyabhigna* concept of *anandasvarupa* of god by the *panchikarana* (including *tirobhava* and *anugraha* aspects) superseded the earlier *trayimaya* form, and introduced

the *Ananda-Tandava* Nataraja icon at Chidambaram in the 10th century A.D., as already noted earlier.

Be this as it may, it is a fact that the ten incarnations of Vishnu, known by the early Pallava times, as seen from the Adivaraha cave record, were only a facet of the Vishnu lore of the times; as this series replaces Krishna with Buddha in its listing, whereas we have Govardhana Krishna panel of the same if not slightly earlier Pallava stage at the same place. The Adivaraha cave-temple at Mahabalipuram, the Narasimha cave-temple at Singaperumalkoil and the Trivikrama temple at Tirukkoilur (all of early *Alvar* stage foundation) in addition to the multitude of Anantasayi cave-temples would indicate how the early form of worship of Vishnu was not indeed based on the *Pancharatra vyuha* concept, but rather upon the pre-*agamic* and basically *Vaikhanasa* stages, with discrete usage of various divinities, including *avataras*, etc., for worship. The Sundaravarada temple at Uttiramerur, datable to the time of Dantivarman Pallava (early 9th century A.D.), is itself built upon the principles adumbrated in the *Marichi Samhita* of the *Vaikhanasagama* mode. It is very likely that *agamic* mandates had not been fully consolidated before A.D. 700 in Tamil Nadu, although the various Puranic and *Samhita* traditions of vaishnava shrine-organisation had been finding their way into Tamil Nadu, already in the first half of the 7th century A.D. For example, the presence of Anantasayi and Mahishamardini association, as already mentioned earlier, would be the off-shoot of the *Devi Mahtmya* section *Markandeya Purana* and the general date of this Purana, from epigraphical evidence in the north (Rajasthan) is around the end of the 6th century A.D. and it is a measure of the quick degree of diffusion in that age by the first half of the 7th century A.D., it has arrived South and had been adopted by the Pallavas. A remarkable and unique feature about the Anantasayi of the Mahishamardini cave at Mahabalipuram is that Brahma on the *nabhi-kamala* is absent, while *panchajanya gana* and *Kaumodaki* are shown, and Varuna and Markandeya *rishis* are depicted below, apart from Madhu and Kaitabha. This shows how the scene here is not a depiction of the creation myth, as such, when Brahma was created first by Narayana out of his *Ichehha-Sakti* but is the *Yoganidra* of Narayana to create *Vishnu-maya*.

It is important to note also that most of the earliest extant shrines, including those which had been visited and made sacred by the early *Alvars*, prior to the 8th century A.D., are of Anantasayi worship and of these, the *Vehka* temple at Kanchipuram (the Dipaprakasa shrine) is mentioned also in the Sangam classic *Perumpanarrupadai* as located at the entrance into Kanchi, the city of Tondaiman-Ilamtirayan. Here, like that of Tiravattaru in Kerala and Nanguneri (Totadrinatha shrine) in Tirunelveli District, the deity is of the *Virasayya*-type with head of the lord to the proper left and feet to the proper right. Two of the largest Anantasayi panels known in India occur at Tirumayam and Namakkal, datable variously to the end of the 7th century A.D. and the second quarter of the 8th century respectively and represent the full galaxy of the type, as adumbrated in the *Vaikhanasa* text. Very obviously this was the period when the close application of such a text in actual temples had become possible. Thus the period was of considerable variation of Vaishnavism and Saiva myths and ritual usages, and on the former side, Anantasayi was by far the most prominent deity.

The introduction of the seated, standing and reclining forms in the three consecutive *talas* of the temple, as at Vaikunthaperumal temple at Kanchi, Sundaravarada at Uttiramerur, Kudalalagar at Madurai and the Saumya Narayana temple at Tirukkoshtiyur conveniently fill this intervening period also, and present a finite development involving the establishment of three, different poses for the deity duly standardised, apart from the vibrant and dynamic Trivikrama form also. The next stage of standardisation was clearly the use of only the standing (and very rarely the seated) form of Vishnu, four-armed with or without Sri and Bhu devis flanking him. It is again interesting that the induction of female consorts into the sanctum to be shown, accompanying the main deity is having a development of its own and is not a pristine practice. The older stages, almost upto the end of the 8th century A.D., or slightly later, show only the god alone in the sanctum. The diffusion of the *Panchavira* cult in the meanwhile had taken place in different parts of Tamil Nadu as in the Parthasarathi temple, Tiruvallikkeni (Madras), the main temple at Nachchiyarkoil, Thanjavur Districť, Venugopala temple at Tiruchchanur, the Gosakha temple at

Terazhundur, and the shrine on the hillock at Tiruttangal. The introduction of Subhadra as the female potential of the Vrishni-Vasudeva group resulted in the assigning of a specific place to the female consort of Vishnu also in the sanctum thereafter. But there was invariably the need to depict only Bhudevi, as Sridevi was already taken as residing on the chest of Vishnu, in the form of the *Srivatsa* mark. It is in this respect that we are able to understand the occurrence of Bhudevi *alone* in *all* Anantasayi panels prior to the middle of the 9th century A.D. After that stage, developments of the various *devatas* around the main deity in the form of *parivara* shrines called for a separate shrine of Sridevi and Bhudevi, and the former came to be installed on the south-west corner of the third *avarana* of the temple, while the Bhudevi shrine, in the form of Andal of Goda devi (the foundling child of Vishnuchitta or Perialvar and the authoress of *Tiruppavai*) on the north-west part of the temple became a norm. It may be stated here that Andal is the very embodiment of Bhudevi, like Sita or Satyabhama, in the same way as Rukmini is the embodiment of Sridevi. While the age of Perialvar, her foster father, would fall in the late 8th or early 9th Century A.D., the actual cononisation of Andal as a saint and deity in her own right takes place only in the 13th century A.D. Hence it is that we find the introduction of Sri shrine and an Andal shrine on the south-west and north-west corners of Vishnu temples coming into prominence mainly from that period onwards. All the earlier temples show only Vishnu as the main deity in the sanctum, or where depicted in conjunction with a consort, as in the Anantasayi or Rajamannar icons, only Bhudevi or Satyabhama respectively are commonly depicted in accompaniment. No doubt the rise of the *Pancharatragamas* and their ritual development in the centuries suceeding the 9th century A.D. were to a great extent further stimulated by the advent of the *Acharyas* like Nathamuni, Yamunacharya and finally Ramanuja with the result that the raising of Sridevi as the separate consort *par excellence* though permanently resident in lord and thus most efficasious for the benedictory role of the Lord, was enunciated in persuance of the *'Dvaya'* philosophy of *Visishtadvoita*.

The periods between the 7th and the 9th century A.D. also saw an uncertain and diffused co-ordination of the Vishnu cult

and the Siva cult with Surya, Durga, Ganesa and Karttikeya for mainly a nebulous stage of polytheism in form and syncretism in thought. This was indeed a variant of the Siva *Panchayatana* form, already in vogue all over the north of India in the 7th and 8th century A.D. involving Siva, Genesa, Durga, Vishnu and Surya. Only Karttikeya is the addition and was clearly established in the southern religious folk and ritual worship, by his early advent in the north and introduction into the south from Western India already in the Krishna valley in 3rd-4th century A.D. during the time of the Ikshvakus, as attested to at Nagarjunakonda in no uncertain terms, in sculptures, temple-building, and in inscriptions. It is most possible, therefore, to argue that the induction of Kartikeya or Muruga into Tamil Nadu should have, most probably, been achieved in these centuries A.D. and and it seems to tally well with the age of the Sangam classics when he is also mentioned as Seyon, as Vishnu is called Mayon, on the basis of the most reasonable date that we can admit for these anthologies.

It is clear that the supercession of Trimurti or Trinity idea by the *Ponchayatana* and subsequently the *shanmata* concepts, was the most natural development of the growing polytheism of the times, until the possibility of an unconsolidated fragmentation of the basic unity of the divinities forming part of these cults, was arrested by the advent of Sankara Bhagvatpada by formulating not only the inter-related divine nexus of the six-fold cults but also the re-establishment of the supremacy of a universalised divinity. This takes two basic forms for the *Udaya* (growth) and *Vilaya* (decay) of the created universe, in order to substantiate the eternity of *rita* and to prove the ceaseless cycle of action until a merger of *rita* and *satya* had taken place by coalescence of the individual *atma* with cosmic *adhyatma* that is God. The examples found at the Trimurti shrine (with Durga), Mahabalipuram (7th century A.D.), Pandya lower Rock-cut cave, Tiruchchi (early 8th century A.D.), Tirumalaipuram (8th century), Tirunelveli District, Sevilippatti cave-temple, Ramanathapuram District, (8th century), Tirupparamkunram (A.D. 773), all indicate the various stages of such a development and nexus. It is important to realise that from the point of view of *archa*, Adi Sankara was aligned equally and uniformly towards Vishnu and Siva. The post-Sankara

period, had necessarily, therefore, to diversify these *Vishnu-tattva* and *Siva-tattva* in a magnificent manner, without introducing sectarian bias. This undesirable aftermath was mostly a medieval phenomenon after the 12th-13th century A.D. An interesting facet of these developments is also the description of the assemblage of celestial figures and minor divinities around the major god-heads like Vishnu or Siva. This is in the form of the Rudras (of whom there are eleven), Adityas (or whom there are twelve), Vasus (of whom there are eight), Maruts, etc. They are spoken of as fit for worship as for instance in the Sundarakanda of *Ramayana* when Hanuman meditates on them before entering Asokavana. They are spoken of in the *Gita* indirectly by Krishna, equating himself with Vishnu of the Adityas, Sankara among the Rudras, etc. They are spoken of by Perialvar as surrounding Anantasayi or Ranganatha (and *Vaikhanasagama* specifically provides for Siva and Brahma to be present in Seshasyi assemblage) and finally we find them in the actual temple sculptures, as for example, Siva on the southern side of Anantasayi in most of the those at Kanchipuram, Tirumayam, Namakkal and Srivilliputtur; and on the side of Siva temples we have the examples of Kailasanatha temple, Kanchi, where the twelve Adityas and the eleven Rudras are shown in panels of side walls within the inner enclosure. The twelve Adityas are again shown at Narttaamalai in the cave-temple (Padinenbhumi·Vinnagar) in front of Vjayalayacholisvaram (carved in the Chola times).

A natural development of this nexus already with later Pallava times, is the Aja-Ekapadamurti which some (carved on the outer *prakara* door lintel at the Shore temple complex and of *C*. Mid 8th century A.D.) are apt to consider as sectarian and extolling the supremacy of *Siva-tattva*, but it is indeed the continuance or restoration of the cohesive or composite character of the universal deity. It reflects the indivisible unitary and centripetal character of the supreme principle as related also to the *gunatraya vibhaga*,

While Vishnu and Krishna forms had been well-employed in art and architecture, a corresponding early occurrence of Rama had not been equally apparent. There is no doubt, however, that Rama in icon and worship had been already in the Pallava period.

We have beautiful description of Rama epic in the Aychchiyar Kuravai (section 17) of *Silappadikaram* referring to destruction of Lanka of Ravana. An inscription of the 15th year of Parakesari (Parantaka I) refers to tax-free land gifted to the deity of Tiru-Ayodhyai-perumanadigal housed in the Vaikunthaperumal temple of Uttiramerur. Since the temple had already existed from the Pallava times to which probably the plinth, terrace and certainly the blustraded broad flight of steps yet surviving belong, we may consider the subshrine of Rama as a regular part of the Vishnu shrine here. We have beautiful bronzes of Rama group too from Paruttiyur, Vadakuppanayur, Vazuvur and Tirruchcherai (all of the 10th century A.D.). We should expect the primary shrines of which these bronzes would have been the *utsavabheras*, should have existed from the earlier centuries. Perhaps, the Pallavas received the tradition of Rama from the Ikshvakus of Nagarjunakonda, one of whose inscriptions extol the virtues of Rama, the epic hero (*Ramasyeva janabhiramasya*) while comparing him to the king.

The other notable cult divinity which is euologised much in literature of the hymnal is Nappinnai the *gopi par excellence*, who is the beloved of Shri Krishna. She is later deified as Nila devi, and Andal or Goda the foundling daughter of Vishnuchitta or Perialvar, (*C.* early 9th century A.D.) refers to her as the bride of Nandagopa's son. She gets mentioned earlier, in *Silappadikaram* in the Aychchiyar Kuravai section where in the dance which took place at Gokula of which Kannan, Balarama and Pinnai (Nappinnai) were participants. Krishna mandapa relief of Mahabalipuram (*C.* 7th century A.D.) shows her by the side of Krishna.

Rama cult receives great boost in the Vijayanagara period in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere as at Hampi (where one of the largest temples for him—Pattabhirama temple—was built in the 16th century A.D.). The Ramasvami temple, Sermadevi (Tirunelveli District) was built in two floors for the superstructure. The temple is called Nigarilicholavinnagaram (in the 24th year of Raja Raja I—*C.* A.D. 1009). The three floors of the temple were orginally for seated, reclining and standing poses of Vishnu. Thus, it would seem that the Rama shrine in this place became more famous in Chola days, although the original temple, apparently of early

Pandya period was of the triple forms of Vishnu, on the lines of other Pandya and Pallava analogies already mentioned elsewhere.

There is another Ramaswami temple at Kumbakonam, built entirely in the Vijayanagara period and presenting a most satisfactory blend of architecture, sculpture and painting. The sanctum which is spacious, in the style of the Vijayanagara period, has a full stone sculpture of seated Rama and Sita, the standing brother and Hanuman seated at the foot with an equally impressive set of *utsavabheras* in bronze of this group. The outer front *mandapa* which is spacious and multipillared carries some very beautiful carvings of various puranic events and divinities, while the wide circumambulatory around the main temple carries on its walls a complete serialisation of the Rama story in mural panels. As a chaste example of Vijayanagara style and its art in Tamil Nadu the temple is notable.

Even under Nayaks Vaishnavism received great fillip since many of the chieftains were themselves devout votaries of Vaishnavism of the day. The most satisfying series of *Tulabhara mandapas*, *Kalyana mandapas* and *unjal* (*hindola*) *manapas*, *Vasanta mandapas* consistent with the newer festivals and ritual in the annual calendar are the contributions of Vijayanagara kings. An *abhisheka mandapa* for temples, however, was already a Chola addition and in the early Chola stage, especially in Siva temples, it was called the *snapana mandapa*.

A very important addition to the Vishnu temples, especially the more prominent ones, was the *chakarattalvar* shrine. The entire concept of the separate deification of Sudarsana *chakra* is quite ancient and has been elaborated in the *Ahirbudhnyasamhita* and the *Chakra purusha* manifestation has a two way aspect both of the front side and the back, for which purpose, the concerned shrine has a door or window on the rear side also along the permbulatory. It is customary to present the *Chakra purusha* within a *shatkona yantra* (geometric mystic design with six corners) and the front face shows Sudarsana Standing in *alidha* pose with sixteen hands holding several weapons, while the rear face of the same figure has the manifestation of Yoganarasimha, four handed, all

the four hands holding *chakra*. We have a very popular and typical major shrine for this *chakra devata* at Kumbakonam called the Chakrapani temple of the Vijayanagara times. Such a shrine when it is generally a subshrine is to be fixed to the S.W. corner of the 3rd or 4th *avarana* and its position, at least in so far as direction is concerned, irrespective of the presence or otherwise of several *prakaras*, is rigidly maintained in all the temples where they occur, although at Kanchi, it is on the N.W. The most outstanding examples are, Pundarikaksha temple at Tiruvallarai, Varadaraja temple, Kanchi and Ranganatha temple, Srirangam. In the Karnataka country, where the *Vaikhanasa* tradition is dominant till today, it was quite popular from the late Hoysala times onwards.

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FORMS AND NORMS

The Indian temple is the most prominent and enduring of the symbols of Indian Culture. It was the product of the genius of Indian craftsmen, their patrons, pontiffs and the devotees, in so far as the *Silpa* texts and the structural architecture go and have the relationship of *Sarira* (body) and *Atman* (soul). Hence a host of *Vastu, Silpa, Sthapatya, Pratishtha, Agama, Tantra, Samhita* and *Purana* texts, have in the more distant past articulated their conception and classification of the structural constituents of the regional temple forms and their implied symbolism. For the same reason, a standardisation of nomenclature which is like a grammar unto literature had also been given due attention. In the sequel the ternary classification of the temple 'order' into *Nagara Dravida* and *Vesara* had been propounded and time and again iterated in the texts. These terms, it may stated without any long-winded argument—which can be seen in the research references in the Bibliography at leisure by the interested reader—were : (i) in actuality, standing for temples employing square, octagon and apse (and its included form of circle) in their plan at all or specific elevational levels; (ii) are coined and are appropriate mainly for south Indian temple forms of the *Vimana* order; (iii) they were the crystallisation of the original five basic shapes noted in the *Brihat Samhita* which also included the rectangular and the elliptical, on the basis of actual utilization on a large scale and then ramified into the 20 and 45 shapes of *Vishnudharmottara* (an appendix to *Vishnu Purana*) and *Agnipurana;* (iv) they have no

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functionally linguistic connotation relating them to certain regions or ethnic communities much as such an argument would appeal to the common man; and (v) its ultimate synthesis could be seen in the *linga* concept and form also where a basal square is surmounted by an octagon and terminates in a circle, by way of cross section—which means that the form of God which is diffused in four directions and among its further mutations into eight, ultimately dissolves into a polygon of infinite sides namely circle, and hence infinity is another name for God. This underscored the basically unitary or synthesised concept of the temple as the embodiment of the universal principle.

Two words are used for temples namely *Prasada* and *Vimana*, the former largely current in the northern temple order (the *rekha prasada* or curvilinear elevational form) and the latter in the southern order, consistently in the canonical and *Sthapatya* texts. The difference as nomenclatural entities is well-taken, since the northern temple is *trivarga* in its elevational organic components, namely *Jagati* (plinth), *Kati* (wall) and *Manjari* (the curved tower), while the southern *Vimana* is *shadvarga* or sixfold in its vertical segmentation namely *adhisthana* (plinth), *pada* (wall), *prastara* (entablature), *griva* (neck), *sikhara* (spire) and *stupi* (finial). Thus the word *sikhara* does not mean identical components in the two 'orders' and the variations possible for them in regional evolution are also based on the diversifications eligible for each of these parts. While the variations of the northern '*sikhara*' are of an aggregate (whole or part) of the miniatures of such *andas* (or primary parts), those of the southern *Vimana* are the result of an arithmetical progression from top downwards in a pyramidal mould, where there is a permanent proportionate relationship among parts.

In the actual formulations, therefore, of their components and even the ancillaries, notwithstanding certain common religious ideals, there are some fundamental divergences which are purely factors of morphological disparity and formal distinctions. The elements of difference, therefore, between the 'northern' and 'southern' temple styles which met along the latitudes of the Krishna basin, made the area south of it an original home of the southern *Vimana* order and made Karnataka and Tamil Nadu two outstanding cradles of these formulations, are briefly as follows:

No.	Ingredient	Southern temple	Northern temple
1.	*Sikhara*	Top part on which the *stupi* or consecrated *kalasa* rests and above the neck or *griva*	The whole upper tower above the cornice levels
2.	*Vinyasasutra* (lineal thread line of the basal plan)	Straight along the sides of the plinth outline confining projections and recessions within this	Of *ratha* offsets resulting in a diagonally laid outer limit for the cardinally placed inner square of the cella
3.	Roofs of axial additions to the cella proper	Flat throughout	Carry tower series successively over each unit
4.	The elevation of the axial additions	Mostly of closed walls with *gavaksha* windows	open *mandapas* with porched balconies or entrances
5.	*Pranala* or water-chute	A special and significant feature of cella with a fixed orientation and function	Not very typical or distinctive in form or function
6.	*Manasutra* (vertical plumbline at the cornice)	Falls just in line with the plinth outline	Falls quite often well inside the spread of the plinth
7.	*Vitana* or ceilings of the interiors	Always plain and featureless and rarely with just a coffer or lotus medallion design in relief	Displays an extremely wide range of design variously of *samatala*, *nabhichchanda* or *kshipta* groups or moulds

No.	Ingredient	Southern temple	Northern temple
8.	*Sukanasa* or *mahanasika*	Almost totally absent particularly in Tamil Nadu except in extremely rare individual cases	Invariable and special adjunct either of the undifferentiated or differentiated kind over the *ontarala* roof and attached to the *sikhara*
9.	*Jagati* or plinth terrace	Non existent and replaced by *upapitha* confined almost to the size of the plinth	Most often present, especially in the *panchayatana* types
10.	*Goupura dvara*	Always present-aligned to the main orientation of the shrine on the cardinal point(s)	Optional or totally non-existent together with the *prakara* and has no relationship with the location of the temple in the premises
11.	*Dhvajasthambha*	Essentially present outside the *mukhamandapa* or in the courtyard or outside the *gopura*, near the *balipitha*	Optional or non-existent
12.	*Prakara*	Essential	Optional or non-existent
13.	Nandi within or without *mandapa* for Siva temple or any other cognizance being for other cults	Essentially present	Optional

No.	Ingredient	Southern temple	Northern temple
14.	*Toranas*	Mostly found as *bhitti toranas* in relief and in late and rare cases as *tulabhara toranas* but not as intrinsic part of temple	Often free standing in cardinal directions and with additional *hindola toranas* also
15.	Sanctum door frame	Invariably plain in Tamil Nadu without even a *lalata bimba*	Very elaborate with *sakhas* (or overdoors) and ornate with motifs Ganga-Yamuna, *prati-haras*, etc.
16.	*Dvarapalas*	Essential and large sized and at main stage(s)	Normally small sized, part of the base of the door jambs of successive chambers, including cella
17.	Subsidiary shrines		
	Saiva	Unitary or *Parivara* (8,16 or 32, etc.)	Unitary or *Panchayatana*
	Vaishnava	Unitary or *vyuha* types	*Vyuha* or none.
18.	*Utsavabheras*	Essential	Non-existent
19.	Temple tank	Essential	Optional
20.	Devi or consort shrine	From 11th century A.D. invariably present jointly or separately	Not at all necessary as consort but sometimes as separate emanations
21.	*Garbhagriha*	Generally *nirandhara*, sometimes *sandhara*	Generally *sandhara*, sometimes *nirandhara*

The southern *Vimana*, thus was served by the specific texts which were written for them in the ternary variations of that order and broadly speaking, the more important southern texts, are *Karana, Kamika, Suprabheda, Vaikhanasa, Pancharatra agamas, Kasyapasilpa, Mayamata, Isanasivagurudevapaddhati, Manasara, Silparatna* and *Tantra-samuchchaya* ; the last two of the medieval times forming the source for Kerala temples.

The southern *Vimana* 'order' divides itself into *Alpa vimana* or single - storeyed, *Jativimanas* which are upto four *talas* or storeys and *mukhya vimana* which are upto 12 *talas* or storeys within limiting height of 200 ft. approximately. All the three types *Nagara, Dravida* and *Vesara* are represented essentially by the *sikhara* shape and could exist in any part of the South. But *Dravida* is invariably the oldest in any chosen region, *Nagara* next and *Vesara* last, relatively.

It would be appropriate to explain the elevational concept of the southern *Vimana* temple. This was a product of many skills. The architect, sculptor, the painter, the stone mason, carpenter, brick layer and the glyptic stucco artist, all these have applied and co-ordinated their specialist techniques in producing a perfected temple edifice. The architect, however, has a greater role, relatively than the others, since he is responsible for the stability and designing of the model. The fine artists like sculptor, painter and stucco carver come in only at a secondary stage and in fact they are the ones who are mostly at the behest of the clergy. The *sthapati* or the architect, is in harmonious liaison with the craftsman as well as the clergy (not to mention the patron) but is always having a more enlarged vision of the shrine model than they. The temple is indeed born, first, in the mind of the architect and through his unerring precision, is reborn in the hands of various artisans, in the process of integrating design and execution. This would mean that the architect's model is no mere subjective fancy nor an array of independent skills, like the stalls of a museum, but a harmonious and comprehensive sublimation of the craft-potential towards a goal which is entirely un-material and indeed transcendental. In the ultimate temple that rises before us—whose earliest definitive arche-type was presented to us in the Pallava monoliths—we see one unified vision of the coalescing inspired expression of all the artisans and artists, masterminded by the *sthapati*.

A product such as this naturally defies dissection but it would be right to say that the Hindu temple architect's insight blended into this assignment, a basic and residuary framework. This framework is a matter of dimensional regularity and symmetry which naturally involves arithmetical perfection. No architect, ancient or modern, secular or religious could have dispensed with balance and poise, implicit and explicit and the ancient *sthapati* was under compulsion to create a model that can grow and evolve without violent dismemberment across the centuries. He resolved the temple body into component limbs or what may be called 'factors' and allowed the scheme to adopt any dimensions to be, either compressed if need be or expanded, as the predilection of the age and patron warranted. These governing 'factors' of the main *Vimana* comprise the thickness of the walls, the width of the circumambulatory or cellular passage around the sanctum (*garbhagriha*), the thickness of the sanctum wall itself and the width of the shrine chamber (usually square). These together represent the gross outer dimensions of the temple body and in the sloping, storeyed elevation above the ground floor walls, these are spread spatially, in the order narrated above, receding to the top *sikhara* piece. The south Indian *Vimana*, as different of the northern *rekha prasada* (curvilinear temple), was of the *shadvarga* category ; the latter being *trivarga* (triple major vertical divisions) as already stated. The *sikhara* piece with its neck (*griva*) is virtually the elevated projection of the sanctum. Its dimentions should almost precisely be equal to that of the sanctum. Usually the outer walls of *Vimana* are rising above the cornice (*kapota*) upto the parapet of miniature-chapel motif (*hara*) within which the passage - corresponding to the ground floor ambulatory circuit around the cella occurs. This passage is called the *alindra*. On this the next storey wall section rises to its *hara* and with a briefer *alindra* passage for the next higher storey, if any, within it and if not, the coping slab right over the cella would rest here. The slabs closing the shell of the *vimana* tower, are together called the *grihapindi*. The *sikhara* with its neck wall just rests on this *grihapindi*. When these are shown with self-evident clarity as detailed above, in the storeyed rise, the *vimana* is designated as of the *anarpita* (non-applique) type, whereas in a variant form where all the 'factors' coelesce to form only a cohesive mass in the temple tower, they would not have the *alindra* passage

between the *hara* and the next ascendant wall extrenally on the tower nor a closed circuit passage internally at the ground floor. In such a case they are designated as of the *arpita* (applique) type. This type would still have the dimension of sanctum wall related to the *sikhara* piece and its sanctum walls will have the cumulative thickness of the 'factors' mentioned above, and would be one solid mass or would show on the walls externally, these elements by projections and recessions. It would have a sanctum whose wall-thickness would correspond in such a case to the (end projection) *karnakuta* of the exterior wall, and would have a false ceiling over the deity in the sanctum, above which the shell of the *sikhara* would recede upto the ceiling slab under the *sikhara*. This sanctum might rarely be larger than the *sikhara* width but still would have a proportionate relation to it.

Thus, the external outline of the wall, the dimension of the sanctum, the number of storeys, the size of the *sikhara* are all related in the proportions. To these are added two more dimensions, namely, the width of the door frame and that of the *pitha* or platform upon which an image or a *linga* presiding over the temple might rest, when this usage begins. It is interesting to note that the door of the sanctum has almost the same width as the thickness of the cella wall and is equal to the width of the platform of the image, in the same way as the height of the temple has a proportion to the height of the image and its base together, from the cella floor. The monolithic '*rathas*' of Mahablipuram, especially the Dharmarajaratha which rises to three storeyed hight with clarity of its constituent limbs, are the best visual evidence of this scheme, and thus are probably the most harmonious of the entire gamut of temple productions in Tamil Nadu. Carved from the top downwards, they exclude the *stupi* whose installation should coincide with the completion of the temple and installation of the deity in the sanctum by a formal consecration.

4

CANONICAL ART STAGES

It is important to note that even the cave-art stage in Tamil Nadu pertained to the formative stages of temple architecture, following the Sangam period, and had carried considerable importance in its architectural enunciations. We may attempt, therefore, an analysis of the layout of the temple which, especially in regard to the nature of the cella (single or multiple) would hold promise for spelling out the essence of the cult thinking of its creators. We may as well divide the monuments initially into two categories, Saiva and Vaishnava, more for convenience and comparison, since we do not yet know for certain if any firm polarisation, between the two votaries had taken place at that stage. But inasmuch as separate temples came to be constructed with diety installed in the main sanctum, it should already reveal a watershed period of Hinduism in Tamil Nadu.

Taking the Sivaite cave-temples first we find that there are examples of single, triple, five-fold, seven-fold, nine-fold and probably even eleven-fold delineation of divinities in the range covering Mahendra's and Mamalla's times. The examples of the first are Dalavanur, Siyamangalam and Tiruchchi, to mention representative specimens of the single cella type. There are minor diversities among these three examples also, since the first is a side-facing shrine, the second a front-facing shrine and the third a shrine with provision for two pits cut in the floor, seemingly to accommodate two sculptures in the round and, if so, legitimately Siva and Uma. We are not dealing with the subsidiary parts of the caves ; their panels, facades, *dvarapalas* and other aspects.

The next type is the triple cella type. The representative examples can be Dharamrajamandapa at Mahabalipuram, Mandagapattu and Trimurti cave-temple at Mahabalipuram. Here again the first is not having any ostensible need to distribute the cell into three, since the inscription of Atyantakama specifically dedicates the *'vesma'* or *'mandiram'* for Sambhu or Durjjhati and called it also as immanent with Siva's benediction. But it is seen that the triple cella were clearly coeval. It is also noted that the central cella is relatively larger than the other two which are more or less equal in size. Hence, it would be appropriate to consider the central shrine for Siva and the other two for the remaining members of the Trinity. However, in view of the fact that there is no sculpture or relief or *linga* or stucco at present, the likelihood is that, these divine figures were perhaps painted on the back walls of the sanctum. The second type at Mandagapattu, by its inscription specifically allots the three shrines to the Trinity by name (*Brahmisvara Vishnulakshitayatanam*) hence, it is dedicated to the Trinity. The third is representing all the three members of the Trinity in relief carving unmistakably. Hence, consistent with their age which is ranging from Mahendra's for the first, to the time of Mamalla to Paramesvara for the other two, the development of the Trinity in spirit and form is well substiantiated.

The third cetegory is the five celled type—with the example at Pallavaram. The orientation of the temple is a typical. The term 'Panchapandava' to it is in popular imagination. The likelihood of the cells being spiritually dedicated to the five-fold aspects of Siva as Mahesa *viz.* Aghora, Vamadeva, Tatpurusha, Sadyojata and Isana cannot be ruled out. It is likely that the central cella which slightly projected in front could be that of Tatpurusha. The anonymity of the temple is somewhat relieved by the presence of oblong benches against the back wall of the cella and the sockets for sculptures in each of the five cella, all of which are of identical size and status. The bench and socket arangement would further show that it is not among the earliest of Mahendra's caves. The *birudas* recorded here which refer to the popular name of his temples at Dalavanur, Tiruchchi, Siyamangalam, Mandagapattu would also substantiate this. The title,

sankirnajati is somewhat suggestive, as it refers to multiple number, more than four though it is a musical term.

The next type is of the seven-fold cella layout, representatives being those of the unfinished cave III at Mamandur and the cave at Vilapakkam. There is no indication here, even any record, of the possible affiliation of the temple. But as all the cella are of the same size and in a row and as there is no indication of even a completion of the cella, we are not in a position to aver its predilection firmly.

As, however, Mamandur cave III which is almost similar to Vilappakkam except that it has a pair of shrines on the side walls on either side in addition, we may consider the incomplete Vilapakkam and Mamandur as of identical type perhaps intended for Siva in the form of eleven Rudras, a beautiful single large panel niche of which is available at Rajasimhesvaram or Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi. In any case, it is not a well spelt out cult manifestation and to that extent might suit Mahendra's times for its origin and layout.

It is from this stage that the monolithic *rathas* were developed in the post-Mahendra times and after Mamalla's own victorious expedition to Badami (Vatapi) garrisoning it for twelve years and return home. The period between his departure to Badami and return are signified by the cave-temple types already typified which seemingly culminate, on the Sivaite side, in the Mahishamardini mandapa type where a projecting *mandapa*—porch—is provided for the central shrine which is clearly intended for Siva and where Somaskanda had been added subsequently during Paramesvaravarman's time. It also has the two side shrines which were intended for Vishnu to the left of Siva and Brahma to the right and had been so indicated by the characteristics of the *dvarapalas* who carry *chakra* and *sankha* on their headgear in the Vishnu cella and by the ascetic type of door keepers on Brahma's side. There is a major feature of the outer *mandapa* where panels of Anantasayi and Durga fighting Mahisa are graphically shown in life size carvings. These panels are clearly of Mamalla's time and show not only the nexus of these two themes in Pallava country, as detailed elsewhere in this book and which reflect the

advent of *Devi Mahatmya* Puranic tradition from north quickly into the south; and in the Pallava domain one is able now to see the devolution of divinities from Mamalla cave-temple stage to the monolithic stage where we have a trinity (in vertical arrangement ?) in Dharmarajaratha, with Somaskanda Siva shrine, in the central *tala*, above the basal *adithla*, the rectangular Bhimaratha probably for Anantasayi, the Arjunaratha seemingly for Harihara sculpture (as seen from Garudantika Vishnu niche on the north wall and Vrishabhintaka Siva on the south); the Draupadiratha for Durga (actually carved in the back wall); the Nakula-Sahadeva apsidal shrine seemingly for Siva separately, as we find most of the apsidal temples in Tondaimandalam dedicated to Siva. Here then is a separation of *svayampradhana* gods from the erstwhile Trinity nexus and subsidiary status, and seemingly the stage is set for structural temples in full steam, which is indeed what Paramesvaravarman tried in his Kuram temple, followed by Narasimha II Rajasimha in a major and magnificent sweep at Mahabalipuram, Kanchi and Panamalai.

Now, reverting to the Vishnu worship situation as reflected in the Pallava cave-art stages, we find that a single cella of oblong shape with narrow platform, seemingly for stucco decoration on the wall is seen at Mahendravadi, which is designated by Mahendra as 'Murarigriha'. A single cella with socket on the platform seemingly for a stele or sculptures is seen at Mamandur northern cave-temple I as at Singaperumalkoil, a single oblong cella, without provision for any platform or socket on the floor or back wall might either have been intended for a stucco figure or for a painted version on the back wall. The possibility of a regular tableau of Narasimha, either with Sri (or Lakshmi) or with Prahlada, (and even with Siva and Brahma on the analogy of the relatively later cave-shrine at Namakkal) and others might have called for an oblong rather then a square cella—an *agamic* stipulation. A single oblong shrine with Seshasayee carved in the role in a massive early form is at Singavaram, while a single square cella with a bench upon which perhaps in stucco a figure of standing Vishnu might have been executed is in Varahamandapa, Mahabalipuram, not dedicated to Varaha as his panel is found outside, nor to Trivikrama, who also has a panel. The remaining two panels of Durga and Gaja-

lakshmi represent the most popular divinities of the period, on the female side, throughout lower south India and, as far as Gajalakshmi is concerned, probably the oldest example of the same in Pallava art, and relatively earlier to the Pandyan Gajalakshmi at Tirupparankunram cave-temple complex. In view of the Adivaraha cave-temple at Mahabalipuram which was itself of part-Mamalla and part-Paramesvara authorship in its execution, this Varahamandapa though dedicated to Vishnu is not for Varaha, nor for Nrisimha, nor Anantasayi, nor Trivikrama and hence might well be for a standard form of Vishnu in a standing posture.

The next type is Adivaraha cave-temple which has also the famous labelled portrait sculptures of Simhavishnu and Mahendra. The cella here is a single one with a bench and with stucco of Bhuvaraha available even today. There are two more Vishnu caves in the Pallava series, liable to be dated later to Rajasimha's time, and perhaps of the time of Nandivarman II, at Kilmavilangai where the cella has a platform and a stone carved relief of standing Vishnu ; and at Vallam in the Vishnu cave there, wherein also it is a single cella with platform and seemingly for a stucco figure. This range would indicate that the earliest separate Vishnu cave-shrine are after Mahishamardinimandapa Anantasayi, and are variously depicting Narasimha, Varaha and other forms of Vishnu in stucco and paint, apart from Anantasayi and later show stone carvings of Vishnu also, leading to a monolithic stage, where Vishnu could be shown in a sculptured panel, followed by structural temple stages. This would explain the concept of Bhimaratha. We have also to take note of the small Vishnu shrine in the Arjuna's penance *basrelief* which shows a carved figure of Vishnu standing and is of the time of Mamalla. We have also, though in a *basrelief*, a figure carving of Krishna with Nappinnai and other cowherds in the Krishnamandapa relief. The Vishnu figure in Trimurti Cave-temple has already paved the way for figure carving in stone for purely Vaishnava usage also.

We are now launched on the Pallava structural temples. We see that owing to the overwhelming Sivaite religious consciousness of the Pallava king Rajasimha, structural stone temples for

Vaishnavism appear to have had a relatively slower pace of growth, in the architectural sense. This meant that the mixed tradition of stone and brick was in vogue for them for quite sometime. These were also conditioned by certain other evolving *agamic* injunctions which related to the type of the *mula pratima* in the sanctum, whether of stone or stucco or wood. It should be realised that ritual worship under Vaishnavism differed somewhat from that of Saivism, in regard to the attention given to the *mula pratima*. Under Saivite worship, it was a Somaskanda panel image which was the chief object of worship, as it indeed was for the entire early period from that of Mamalla to the latter part of Rajasimha's reign. This is clinched by actual details of the sanctum flooor and arrangements for discharge of *abhisheka* water and the presence or otherwise of a *linga* by independent and internal evidence on the plinth mouldings and the implication of the *agamic* texts that would be applicable to such situations. There was no difficulty in placing this panel image in the form of a carved stone relief. But the moment a *linga* is introduced—whether of the faceted *dharalinga* type which was introduced in the last part of Rajasimha's reign and continued virtually upto the time of Nandivarman III or other, we have the replacement of Somaskanda panel with a regular *linga* form by now systematised into a pattern akin to what was already seen in the cave-art and structural phase of Pandyas-Muttarayars. The reason for the dichotomy of *linga* worship in the cave-art of the Pandyan region but not in the Pallava region, is explained elsewhere and only from the time of Rajasimha and later from Nandivarman's time that we have sculptural evidence in the temples themselves of the *lingas*-as at Airavatesvara temple and Muktesvara temple at Kanchi respectively.

While this was the case with Saivite worship, in Vaishnavite types, there was a need to cover the *mulabhera*, where it is made of brick and stucco or wood, with a ritual coat of plaster specially made for this purpose (called *ashtabandhana* or *punugu-chattam*) and in due course, several such layers of plaster cover the original deity allowing for the removal of damaged plaster layers. Oil is also smeared from time to time for seasoning it ; *abhisheka* as such was not in daily vogue for Vishnu images and only ritual sprinkling of water is done with a *kurcha* or *durva* grass for *mula-*

bhera's abhisheka (or *Tirumanjanam*) ritual starts in Vaishnava temples of Tamil Nadu from the time when *utsavabheras* have been instituted in bronze and simultaneously a ritual bath periodically for the deity on festivals in nearby sacred rivers or in temple tank or even in the sea, if very near, became common. In these circumstances, the stucco or wooden deity was preferred to stone images which need not be provided with ritual coat. An inherent injunction in cases of wooden or stucco *mula pratima* was that the temple itself in these cases should be of brick and stucco and not of stone, above the plinth level. Thus mixed architectural models either entirely built of brick and stucco or of stone upto the plinth and brick and stucco and timber above came to being. Temples like Varadaraja temple at Kanchi and Sundaravarada temple at Uttiramerur are cases in point. Several other cases were also there at Kanchi such as at Ashtabhuja Vishnu, Padagam temple and Tiruvikrama temple at Tirukkovalur (S. Arcot District) elsewhere. The crux of the situation, therefore, confined Vishnu temples to more perishable materials and some of these temples when they came to be rebuilt or restored later in stone medium along with a change of *Mulabhera* also in stone, after the advent of the *utsavabhera* tradition in bronzes, the original features had become totally obliterated and replaced by the stone work of the period of replacement in stone. We may briefly refer now to this situation in the following cases.

The most important among the Vaishnava temples which have either perished or got modified indirectly referred to in the hymnals of the early Vaishnava Saints of Tamil Nadu (*alvars*) are ;

(a) Kadalmallai - Talasayanam

(b) Ashtabhujam ; and

(c) Attiyuran.

Of these, the first mentioned seemingly refers to the rock cut reclining Vishnu carving at present sandwiched between the two Shore Temples at Mahabalipuram Rajasimhesvaram and Kshatriasimhesvaram facing opposite directions. This reclining Vishnu figure was carved on a low rocky outcrop including part of the plinth of its and probably was standing on pillars and brick and stucco superstructure before the time of Rajasimha.

Its position somewhat interfered with the scheme of two temples that Rajasimha erected on the shore, probably also utilising the large low rocky outcrop foundation. The uniqueness of this rock-cut image lies in the fact that stylistically when compared with the Anantasayi of Mahishamardinimandapa, it is even earlier than Mamella's time ; and secondly in its omitting the serpent (*sesha*), weapons, Bhu, and Brahma. In this respect it satisfies the *Vaikhanasagama* description of the minimal or *adhama* stage of the *abhicharika* version of this theme. This suggests that it might have been executed in the last years of Mahandaravarman I by his son, Mamalla after the former's humiliating reverses at the hands of the Chalukyan army form Badami, and when the Pallava domain was shrunken. This *abhicharika* image causing reverses to the enemy with god having his leg towards the north and generally aspecting north-west where Badami lies, was established in this *Jaladurga* on Mahabalipuram, as such *abhicharika* figures have to be fixed either on the sea coast, or in the middle of a forest or in a desert. But this shrine which apparently had stone pillars and brick and stucco superstructure was built, according to the recently published Chitoor Copper Plates of Nripatunga, by Mamalla (*yassayyagriham asmabhih jalanidhau chakre mahachakinah*) was worshipped by Bhutattalvar and, the Vaishnava saint who hailed from Mahabalipuram and by Tirumangai who waxed eloquent about the trade—prosperity and of boats laden with merchandise near the Vishnu temple on the shore; and while the former might have seen the original temple intact, the latter saint who is post-Rajasimha in date could have only seen the small canopy that Rajasimha provided to this Vishnu temple which he also renamed (as narapatisimha pallava Vishnu griham) on its lintel, in token of his restoration after its initial damage. The deity was called Talasayana (lying on the ground) as different from the Jalasayana temple erected in medieval times in the centre of the village and even now existing in front of the 'Arjuna's penance', relief.

The other temple Ashtabhujam is in Kanchi and has been sung by another of the early *alvars*, Peyalvar, around *C.* A.D. 600 or earlier as *Attabuyakarattan* in his hymnal. Vishnu as Ashtabhujaswami was known from early times, the oldest and yet nearest such figure being the one found at Nagarjunakonda where in a

temple sanctum on stone pedestal records it that Abhira King Vasusena (who ran over the Ikshvaku country for a while), had established a wooden image of Bhagavan Ashtabhujaswami (*C.* A.D. 325-50). Other later examples are found in Badami Vaishnava cave III (A.D. 578) and Virupaksha temple, Pattadakkal (A.D. 744). But the Ashtabhujaswami temple at Kanchi by its having been sung by the early *alvar*, was quite early around the same age as the Badami example, and at that time, its shape should have been in brick and stucco architecture and perhaps with wooden image which when the temple was renovated in its present form in the Chola period, was provided with a stone image in the sanctum by the *agamic* stipulation mentioned already. The third example is the celebrated Varadaraja temple at Kanchi, one of the four most sacred temple for southern Vaishnavism, the other three being Srirangam, Tirupati and Melkote (Karnataka). Here, again, the deity was sung by the early *alvar*, Bhuttalvar, who also sang about Talasayanam at Mahabalipuram and the god was called *Attiyuran* named after the village Attiyur which was then a suburb of the main Kanchi—the present day Siva Kanchi) and faced west on a low eminence. The temple had expanded phenomenally over the centuries and the chief landmark had been the existance of the image of worship in wood (known as Atti-varada), the last such wooden replacement of the original being now kept sealed in a chamber in the tank of the temple, when the statue was replaced in stone—the image that we see today in the sanctum. The replacement apparently took place in the 13th or 14th century A.D. since we detect this 13th century situation from an interpolation to *Jayakhya Samhita*. Though originally it was a northern Vaishnava text of the 5th-6th century A.D., this interpolation in the first chapter elaborately describes Varadaraja temple at Kanchi (though out of context with the main text), as also the 10-day Vaisakha festival (as observed till today) the accretionary features of the *sopanas* of the *garbha*, *ardhamandapa*, outer chamber upto the *gopura*, as we would have seen in the 13th century A.D., including the fact that the *bimba* of Varadaraja temple of Hastisaila is of *daru* or wood. But we have only a stone image today. Hence it is obvious that the interpolated section was probably composed well after the time of Ramanuja who was directly concerned with the systematisation of the worship at

Kanchipuram and until then the name of the place was Attiyur, since even inscriptional references to Chola endowments to the temple call the god as *Attiyuralvar* upto the end of the 11th century A.D. at least. Its special name as Hastisaila or Satyavrata Kshetra was more in the religious texts rather than in temporal records on certain special grounds of philology and symbolism.

The relevent further point was that from the time the image was changed to stone from wood, the temple was also constructed elaborately in stone. While the original temple should, perhaps in the Pallava period, not have been a substantial edifice and probably of brick and stucco. This is one of the most interesting examples of the flux, mutations and hieratic change that vaishnavism and its temples underwent in the watershed period between its brick and stucco stage and the stone structural stage. This, together with *Sthalamahatmya, Sthalavriksha, utsavabhera*, canonisation of the saints, and reading of their hymns in the daily programme of the temple; and structural additions to the temple to accommodate festivals, etc., all took place around the 10th century A.D. or slightly earlier, which was indeed the most significant stage in the art of Tamil Nadu and Kerala alike.

In so far as the other hieratic models under Vaishnavism of Tamil Nadu are concerned, we may note the following chief archetypes : firstly the *Panchavira* cult temple which designs a rectangular temple to accommodate Vasudeva-Sankarshana-Aniruddha-Pradyumna-Satyaki and Subhadra (or renamed as Rukmini in Tamil Nadu) in the sanctum. The type sites are Parthasarathi temple, Tiruvallikkeni at Madras (8th century A.D.) and parallel types at Venugopala temple at Tiruchchanur, near Tiruppati, Nacchiyarkoil near Kumbakonam, Therazhundur Gosaka temple, Sundararaja temple, Tiruttangal, Ramnathapuram District, in the Pallava, Chola and Pandya countries. The *next* arche-type is that of triple shrines for seated, standing and reclining Vishnu forms one above the other in three storeys. The type site is Vaikunthaperumal (or Paramesvara Vinnagaram) at Kanchi (mid 8th century A.D.) with parallel types at Sundaravarada temple, Uttiramerur, Kudalalagar temple at Madurai in Madurai District and Saumyanarayana temple Tirukkoshtiyur in Ramanathapuram District and Mannar-

koil in Tirunelveli District, all save the first, in the Pandyan country. The next model is where the ground floor is left solid or hollow and the main shrine is in the upper floor. The type site is Pundarikaksha temple at Tiruvallarai (Tiruchchi District) and parallel at Vatapatrasayi temple at Srivilliputtur in Ramanathapuram District. Then we have the approach to the sanctum from the rear side of exterior of sanctum wall, through a pair of identical flights of steps designated as *uttarayana* and *dakshnayana* entrances and used accordingly in summer and winter. In such temples where seemingly Vishnu is identified as Surya in the Vedic pattern, there is also provision for the solar chariot, complete with yoke fastening, horses, elephants, and wheels. The type site here is Sarangapani temple at Kumbakonam, although the Pundarikaksha temple at Tiruvallarai of the preceeding model is a type of this case also. It is not clear if this model or the Saivite model of the *mukhamandapa* being converted into a south facing chariot *mandapa* as at Darasuram (and often in the form of separate *mandapas*, as at Nagesvara Kumbakonam, Kunnandarkoil, Tiruvakkarai, Vriddhachalam, Chidambaram and a dozen other places) that was to enthuse and inspire the Eastern Ganga Narasimha with is grand chariot temple for Sun-God at Konarak. But if priority of date is any criterion, then, perhaps Darasuram is the earliest such example, and in that case, Vaishnavism chose its own special reason to make this chariot motif fit to a nicety the *Uttarayana-dakshinayana* stairway scheme of the Sun god in his annual track and this would be the most imaginative application of art motifs to a prevailing credo.

In so far as the other models are concerned, we might perceive that the earliest stages of cave-temples in Tamil Nadu for Saivism were preoccupied with transverse axis of shrine-spread, as already explained, in triple, five-fold upto nine-and eleven-fold exposition; but all directed towards the same orientation. Then it further integrates Siva-Vishnu bipolar nexus with the other divinities like Surya, Karttikeya, Durga and Ganesa into opposed shrine arrangement with common vestibule. This was common to Pallava and Pandya cave architecture. Then it developed in the monolithic art, a linear longitudinal axis and continued it as its outstanding and diagnostic feature throughout, with closed hall telescoped one into another leading from the

sanctum to the *agramandapa* and *Nandi* pavilion. This was unlike the north where, tendencies to integrate longitudinal and transverse axes into cruciform or latin-cross types are seen time and again in the developed temple.

The structural style started with multiplying the subshrines in the main *vimana* set-up to have a better visual substantiation of the homogeneous and synthesised version of god-head in the form of *ashtamurti* (as at Kailasanatha, Kanchi) *panchamurti* or Mahesa at Panamalai, and a variant of the same at *Aivarkoli*, Kodumbalur. The next stage of symbolism was heralded when the unified concept of god head was variegated into a *parivara* or nexus concept in the *Ashtaparivara*, *Shodasaparivara*, as represented typically by Vijayalayacholisvarm, Brihadisvara temple, Thanjavur as well as Muvarkoil Kodumbalur respectively. The further strides made by the temple complex soon enough shed this *parivara* grouping and indeed any nexus but tended to be preoccupied with the relationship between God and Goddess link. This was a major development and one which spelt corresponding developments for Vaishnavism also which in the earlier stages was exploiting the *vyuha* nexus of *Vaikhanasa* and *Pancharatra* prescriptions like *Vishnu vyuha* with *Purusha* in the centre with Achyuta, Ananta, Narasimha and Varaha in the four corners in separate shrines in the first *avarana* and similar disposition of other divinities in the second, third, fourth upto seventh *avaranas* or circuits, in which Sri is in the south-west corner in the third circuit particularly. This classic arrangement has been adhered to in the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam which has the *sapta prakara* scheme and has the divinities of the *Vishnu vyuha* of the *Pancharatra* mode in the first *avarana* immediately around the innermost shrine, and correspondingly the *Vaikhanasa* (earlier) specification of Durga and Ganesa *niches* on the exterior walls of the *ardhamandapa* and the other *avarana devatas* in consecutive circuits, wherein Sri or Lakshmi is found in the south-west corner in the third *Avarana*.

In the developed scheme of *avarana* devatas as prescribed in the *Padmasamahita Pancharatra*, corresponding to the Saivite formulae was the Vaishnava scheme with Purusha, Achyuta, Hayagriva, Sankarshana, Varaha, Pradyumna, Ananta, Aniruddha and Narasimha in the *Navavyuha* scheme, while the Vishnu-Shri arrangement corresponding to the Saivite prototype of

Swami and *Amman* shrines varied into several layouts such as intergrating consort shrine, generally facing south, in the common *mahamandapa* of the Siva temple as at Kilayur ; then separating it and placing it outside the main temple, as at the Brihadisvara, Thanjavur; then placing it side by side with the Siva temple as at Gangaikondacholapuram ; and finally separating it into a shrine complex of its own, as at Madurai (Menakshi-Sundaresvara). The Vaishnave usage kept Srl or *Tayar* subshrine always on the south-west corner of the temple court whatever be the orientation of the main shrine (by which token we have the unique spectacle at Varadaraja temple of Kanchi where the God is facing west and the Goddess is facing the God from south-west corner of the third *avarana* there). The only concession to further developments they made was in respect of Goda or Andal shrine which (on the symbolism of Goda being the *amsa* of Bhudevi, like Sita, Satyabhama, etc.) they placed in the corresponding north-west corner of the temple court so that Sri and Bhu occur to the right side and left side of God, as is found in bronze or stone images of Vishnu accompanied Sri and Bhu. On this analogy, Krishna has Rukmini to the right and Satyabhama to the left, while Rama (being an *ekapatnivratin*) has an ambidextrousness in showing Sita in the earlier stages to his left, as a Bhudevi *amsa* and in the developed *utsavabhera* stage as a Sridevi *amsa* and placed to the right of Rama. One important development, sometimes common to Saivism and Vaishnavism of the early period, on the textual recommendation, was the saptamatrilka group on the southern court, facing north, but with the introduction of consort and God shrine liaison besides the separate temples for other divinities also, Saptamatrikas disappear after the 11th century A.D. from Tamil religious usage. In Kerala, they are shown either as separate temples or in the form of *bali*-stones arranged in a row on the outer circuit around the *Sri Koil* on the south.

5

MODELS

A. Early art

Cave-temple stages—Pallava Cave-temples, monoliths and sequel

King Mahendravarman should be credited with having been a visionary king whose ideals of royalty had indeed also a royal sweep of interests. On the one hand, we have his direct involvement in the rural prosperity by the digging of irrigation tank like the Mahendra tataka at Mahendravadi and on the other we see him initiating a trend in rock-art on such a hard medium as granite, and displaying quite a few varieties of temple lay-out within the limitation imposed by the rock excavation into the very bowels of the hill. There is every chance that the inspiration came to him from the granite cutting attempted by the patrons of the jain *digambara* monks who chose the sequestered natural caverns in the peppery hills of Tondaimandalam, for producing smoothly polished beds. The polish idea for them was a hangover of the Mauryan polish, since the very migration of men and religious tenets which brought those jains to distant Tamil Nadu proceeded from the Mauryan homeland of Bihar in the closing years of the Mauryan empire before the advent of the Sungas. The cutting of granite was carefully planned as seen from the experimental homework attempted on plain faces of the hillock, here and there, by the 'chocolate-slab' technique of grids with sunk channels and progressive attrition of the squares. In the cave-temple art, however, the accent was on ground plan and pillar design, besides carved panels. It could be noted in most of the cave-temples of Mahendra that he was content with a massive square and octagonal pillar shaft design and a sculptureless interior mostly,

except for *dvarapalas*. Even the cella is almostly entirely bare. The layout of the cave interior, however, suggests several designs that were seemingly contemporary preferences. We have dealt with the model eisewhere but would only emphasise that both front-facing and side-facing temples were in vogue.

The former were always for a group of divinities of equal importance or for several manifestations of the same deity, while the latter was for a unitary divinity. This way, it would be possible for us to presume that his Dalavanur and Tiruchchi cave-temples (both of which have clear internal evidence of architecture and inscription to ascribe them to the terminal stage of Mahendra's rule) were meant for a unitary divinity, from which stage Mamalla takes over and with deliberation enriches the walls of his cave-temples with several large panel sculptures, as in Varaha Mandapa using a unitary divinity concept besides continuing with Trinity nexus also, and culminates in the monolithic models. His own mental ken was impressed by what he saw at Badami (Vatapi) which he invested and held for a dozen years and the monolithic art of the Pallavas is the most revolutionary architectural designing in the whole spectrum of Indian art, alike by its age, modulations and intrinsic qualities of canonical adherence, timber and stucco styling and sumptuous elevational profiles. It is then that one realises how much of architectural heritage was already claimed in the late 6th century or early 7th century Tamil Nadu which, in the extenuating circumstances mentioned by Mahendra in his Mandagapattu cave record, Mahendra himself could not exploit and only Mamalla could, making the ternary classification of *Nagara*, *Dravida* and *Vesara* applicable outstandingly for the lower southern India. By the same token, while Mahendra's cave-temples are almost invariably complete to the last detail and were seemingly in worship Mamalla's *ratha*' models were, by and large, incomplete and might not have been, in some cases at least, ready for worship and would have had also, by the strength of the same argument, continued to engage the attention of successive kings (like Mahendra II and Paramesvara) to bring them nearer completion. It is significant also to note that almost all the Pallava cave-temples and monoliths are royal programmes, wherein lay patrons are not particularly recorded, unlike the situation elsewhere, even in the Pandyan country, in the over-

lapping period from the latter part of the 7th century onwards. It could mean, that lay patrons were quite involved in other temple activities of the more perishable media like brick and stucco coevally, and Mahendra and Mamalla were only immortalizing themselves by their spiritual enterprises and artistic insight.

The individual cave excavations of Mahendra and Mamalla were relatively modest ones. Upwards of a dozen of the former, of which nearly eight carry foundational records, are known, but the cave-temples following the Mahendra style which continue seemingly even later (like Orukkalmandapa at Tirukalukunram, Kotikkal mandapa at Mahabalipuram) are only indicative of the mechanical prolongation of a vogue, while still on the lookout for a new orientation and innovation. All the same, one should not fail to note that even the cave-temples reveal significant contemporary developments of pillar-order and other architectural details under Mamalla, as shown by the fully furnished *kapota* or cornice of the facade flexed in front of the main beam and decorated with *nasika* at intervals, corresponding to the columnation of the facade below, in also showing a *hara* or string of miniature *Vimana* models representing *salas* (rectangular barrel-vaulted type) and with inter-connected cloister wall; and in the greater projection of distal shrines into the *mandapas* and showing their bases, wall-sections and entablatures. The shrine door itself has a well flexed cornice above its beam, marked by *nasikas*. The pillars show all the elements of the 'order' and variegate the base both by couchant lions—a symbol of renasecent but quiescent power which, later in Rajasimha Pallava's times were depicted as rearing always, suggestive of rampant spiritual zeal. A still later repetition of it as in the early Chola times, when the couchant lion again adorns the base of pillars, was seemingly in the same symbolic spirit. We see in Vijayanagara times, in the *Kalyana mandapas* an even more blatant spirit of exultation in the frontal row of vigorously prancing horses. The monolithic models show the total external aspect of storeyed *vimanas* faithfully, complete with their *mukha mandapa* porch. They were invariably carved from top to bottom, a reversal of the process normally adopted in structural temples, whether of brick or stone.

After Mamalla's outstanding monolithic *rathas*, followed by a brief reign of his son, Mahendra II (A.D. 663-672), Paramesvara I

(A.D. 672-700) distinguished himself with the carving of the monolith Ganesa Ratha, so called, and also in initiating for the first time, a structural *vimana* in simple constructional pattern of using a major slab for each side wall and covering by a roof slab, as seen in the central shrine of Vedagirisvara temple on the top of Tirukkalukunram hill. The inner faces of these slabs were carved with reliefs of Dakshinamurti, Nandi, Chandikesvara and Somaskanda, the last on the rear slab. This temple, called the Mulasthana temple on the hill, in a later inscription, should have had a brick temple antecedent to this, of the time of Mamalla himself in view of the retrospective references to Mamalla-in the later records of the place. The second experimentation of Paramesvara was that of arranging granite courses to simulate in a composite way the mouldings of the plinth as at the apsidal temple at Kuram and Kalambakkam. But this technique became unsatisfactory and tedious and in any case, was seemingly not amenable to superstructural designing, which in his time also continued to be of brick and mortar and tile, as seen from the Copper Plate inscription relating to his Kuram temple itself. Rajasimha or Narasimhavarman II (A.D. 700-728) continued with some rock-cut shrines also, as at Saluvankuppam near Mahabalipuram, but is mainly notable for his having adopted primarily sandstone for the structural architecture at Kanchi, his capital, although the more tractable gneissic granite variety, locally available at Mahabalipuram, was used there as seen by a group of four temples at Mahabalipuram, namely, the two Shore Temples, Mukundanayanar and Olakkannesvara shrine atop the Mahishamardinimandapa rock. Monolithic models of the types of *Rathas* were virtually given up, though a few large boulder out crops were desired to be designed into smaller temple designs as seen in the Valayankuttai and the two Pidari Rathas, on the western side of the hillock at Mahabalipuram.

While the sectioning of the elongated outcrop of granite into three segments out of which four monoliths in a row (namely Dharmaraja, Bhima, Arjuna and Draupadi Rathas had been cut, would imply a predetermined and deliberate choice of their design. The models themselves have been well-chosen, with the Nakula-Sahadeva ratha of apsidal shape on a separate conical outcrop in front of Draupadi Ratha, Paramesvaravarman's

Ganesa Ratha in the village, near to Varahamandpa cave and the three isolated cheese - cake monoliths datable between AD 675-725 on smaller boulders on the western part of the hill. All these nine models executed within an interval of about 75 years virtually laid down the matrix of *vimana* forms, their formal and constructional modulations and became the major terms of reference for any consideration thereafter of the southern temple form, particularly in Tamil Nadu.

Excepting the Dharamaraja Ratha (which has *kapota bandha* plinth type-seemingly a Chalukyan borrowal) all others are of *pratibandha* type of plinth moulding combination. Only Dharmaraja and Bhima Rathas have an open pillared ambulatory around the sanctum (yet unfinished) of the ground floor. In terms of variety of class Dharmaraja Ratha and Arjuna Ratha are of the *Tritala* and *Dvitala Dravida vimanas* respectively, the Bhima ratha of the *ekatala aratasya Nagara* type, Nakula-Sahadeva, *dvitala Vesara* type and Draupadi Ratha of the *Nagara* type of the rudimentary *rekha sikhara*. This last alone among the Rathas is characterised by three applique *makara toranas* around the cardinal niches reflecting a design somewhat at variance with the other *vimana* models. These *toranas* which were seen in some cave-temples as at Dalavanur and for the (relatively late) Durga niche outside the Trimurti cave temple do not occur again until the structural temples of Rajasimha at Kanchipuram wherefrom they grow in use and became later the semicircular tympanum of crowded, weakly relieved carvings over the cardinal niches of the early Chola temples.

It is also to be seen that Dharmaraja Ratha is a fine synthesis of architecture and sculpture. It shows the most archaic textual model wherein the top *tala* also sports a *hara* parapet - a feature which, it may be noted, is seen in the early Chalukyan *Dravida vimanas* at Badami and Mahakut in the Karnataka country. The Ratha, further, displays more than forty panel carvings in its three *talas*, of which the ground *tala* ones which are of almost life size have among them one which is taken as a portrait carving of the royal author. There are also several *birudas* mostly of the king (Mamella) and in archaic Pallava grantha which Hultzch opined should be ascribed to the early 7th century A.D. at least. The carvings of this Ratha also include such interesting themes as

Vinadhara Dakshinamurti, Bikshatana, Ardhanari, Kalari, Vrishabhantika, Harihara, Lakulisa, Surya, etc., which are to be used in the succeeding times also in the Chola country. Other interesting architectural features of the Ratha include the continuance of the *hara* of the ground *tala* over the *mukhamandapa* roof also (after the Chalukyan practice) and the projection of a *kuta-sala* perspective to the corner of the *hara* by telescoping the adjacent members. This feature reappears in the structural architecture of Rajasimha as in the Shore Temple, Rajasimhasvara, in the *hara* of its *mukhamandapa*. Of historical importance is the label of Mamalla on the balustrade (*pakshasila*) of the flight of steps on the eastern face of the second *tala* and thus the lower parts of the temple could have even been completed after Mamalla, although the third *tala* which is complete in all respects including a cella showing Somaskanda on the back wall probably introduced by 'Atyantakama'. This *biruda 'Atyantakama'* on the front lintel and also on the eastern side would seem to belong to his grandson Paramesvaravarman I who here, as elsewhere in the Adivaraha cave-temple, was also responsible for the completion of the monuments concerned, which clearly were partially executed already by Mamalla. The Ratha in the village which is shown rising one *tala* higher than Bhima Ratha, both of which being otherwise similar in the *sala sikharas*, is the work of this Paramesvaravarman I. It is interesting that some of the other types of elevational projections, though not employed in separate monolith are seen on the end faces of Ganesa and Bhima Rathas (for *vritta vimana* of *dvitala* type) while another on the front face of Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha is that of *shadasra* (hexagonal) *sikhara*. This last is nomenclaturally, along, with the octagonal, also classified as *'Dravida'* in the texts. The Valayankuttai and Pidari Rathas show a distinctive advance over that of the other monoliths and are seemingly the works mostly of late Paramesvara and Rajasimha. Their significant departure is in respect of showing two *sala panjaras* in the recession between *karnakuta* and *mukha bhadra* sections of the walls. These are seen employed later in Cholamandalam style apart from the later Pallava examples.

When we come to the structural temples, we see that, though seemingly following the tradition of Mamalla-Paramesvara

monolithic models, these are significant evolutions of the temple forms in quicker pace, thanks to the development of not only a very large body of temples in the periods of Rajasimha and others that follow on the throne of Kanchi, but also of the religious práctices afoot in the Pallava realm. The magnificant array of Rajasimha's temples in Tondaimandalam, of which one counts as many as a dozen at Mahabalipuram, Kanchi and Panamalai, reveal a new spirit pervading religious art. The crowning effort of the period is Rajasimhasvara at Kanchi on the one hand and the Shore Temples at Mahabalipuram on the other. It is interesting that these temples of Rajasimha had been tastefully carved with a multiplicity of panel sculpture almost in a continuous canvas, though with lines of separation among these, through wall pilasters, as at Mamallapuram (except in Mukundanayanar) or at Kanchi, in the Kailasanatha, Pírvatana, Tripurantaka, etc., or at Panamalai, besides wall paintings, excellent double stages of which are available at Kailasanatha, Kanchi and fragments of great beauty at Panamalai.

Himself sporting among his profuse inscriptions, titles and records, the *biruda* of *Agamapriya*, Rajasimha was able to introduce several unique and original features into his constructions, as for instance, the *vastu padhanyasa* scheme in the Kailasanatha layout of the miniature shrines ; in the *prakara* cloister, the representation of Vishnu anugrahamurti or Chakradanamurti in Airavatesvara temple - which is mentioned in *Amsumadbhedagama* and is unique in several respects ; and in the integration of the *Ashtamurti* and *Mahesa* cultures with architectural planning, the former as in the Rajasimhasvara which has seven subshrines built in the thickess of the main wall and accessible from outer court, forming eight shrines together with the main shrine, and Panamalai where three subshrines on the *bhadra* projections (but all oriented either east or west) along with the main sanctum the five-fold Mahesa manifestitation of Siva. Some more architectural and cult details of his temples are to be seen under the section on structural temples of the Pallavas which follows further below.

It is important before we leave this section to comment on the absence of the *linga* worship in the early Pallava times almost upto the time of Rajasimha. Evidence for this is fairly conclusive

both internally,as by plinth and sanctum evidence, the glorification and location of Somaskanda in the cella for entire period as externally by the injunctions of *agamic* texts and the very nature of the first *linga* which appears in the Rajasimha period namely the faceted or fluted *dhara linga* without any *pitha* which continues virtually during the entire later Pallava period.

It is clearly an individualistic feature, surrounded though the Pallava realm was by Andhradesa to the north where in the cave stage rock-cut *linga* was known, and Muttaryan-Pandyan caves to the south where, again this was practised. This also explains why in the early Pallava art itself there is a prodigious variety of Saivite iconography and panel carving exploiting even some very rare forms of Siva, Rajasimha's times witnessed the employment mainly of sandstone for the temples—as continued by later Pallavas also, though he was already not loath to experiment on a somewhat more friable gneissic rock at Mahabalipuram in the four temples he built there.

The later Pallavas, of whom the most famous were Nandivarman II Pallavamalla, Dantivarman and Nandivarman III were builders. Vaikunthaperumal temple at Kanchi of the first, Sundaravarada temple at Uttiramerur of the second and Kailasanatha temple at Tirupattur (Tiruchchi District) of the third are definitive creations of the times, each experimenting with specific features of plan and elevation. The first and second are in effect of the same *milieu* from the ritual point of view, being the elevational spectrum of triple shrines of seated standing and reclining forms of Vishnu which, became a specific cult mannerism of the period and were repeated in the Pandyan region also a little later as at Tirukkoshitiyur, Saumyanarayana temple (Ramanathapuram District), Kudalalagar temple (Madurai District) and Vishnu temple at Mannarkoil (Tirunelveli District). The historical sculpture panels in the Vaikunthaperumal temple dealing respectively with the circumstances leading to Nandivarman II (a collateral prince) ascending the Kanchi throne after the interregnum in A.D., 731 and the events of his reign after his coronation, the latter provided with inscribed labals are unique representations of the contemporary happenings. It should be noted that whether in

the time of Rajasimha or in the late Pallava, carvings cover the entire walls of the exterior and seemingly reflect the influence of the Chalukyan vogue. The Pandya practice was not generally to show any carving or niches on the ground floor walls and Cholamandala practice was for showing only the cardinal niche carving. The structuring of the Vaikunthaperumal type with its cellular parallel walls, with flight of steps leading through them into the upper *talas* is a successful experimentation in solids and voids in early architecture, otherwise, it is also seen that while Rajasimha temples show only octagonal and square *sikharas* for temples, Nandivarman temples show besides the octagonal the circular *sikharas* as well, for the first time, as at Muktesvara of Kanchi.

A significant polarisation of architectural forms takes place in this period in respect of the apsidal shrines. There is no doubt that the apsidal form had been popularised mainly through Buddhism whose *Chaityas* had this plan and at one stage were built in every part of India except Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Then under the Pallavas it received a great boost and came to be classified as one among the *Vesara* forms, as typified in the Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha at Mahabalipuram. It was called the *Gajaprishtha-kriti* (elephant back form) in the texts. But strangely enough, outside Tondaimandalam, it was totally unknown, whether in the Chola, Pandya, Muttarayar, Kongu, or Chera territories in which last zone, it was however, seen used after about A.D. 1200 whereafter it becomes fairly prolific there. It is very sparingly used however, for the subsidiary *parivara* shrine of Ganesa in certain parts of Chola and Muttarayar country, as at Tiruvenkadu of the former and Nangavaram of the latter. The reason why Pandya zone which received so much from the Chalukyans did not use it is not known. But even the Cholas who had taken so much otherwise, from the Pallavas did not also fancy it much. However, inside Tondaimandalam, Cholas built quite a few of them as at Oragadam in Chingleput District and Jvaraharesvara, Kanchipuram. The only explanation to this rather enigmatic situation could probably be that only Tondaimandalam craftsmen were adepts in this rather special type of construction and the expertise was not existing in other zones in the earlier period. In the later periods, impact of

the other phenomenal development in temple architecture reduced its frequency even in Tondaimandalam, and the shape also becomes almost that of a circular sanctum to which a transept-like front is added as at Jwaraharesvara or only the upper most-*sikhara* part reflects the apsidal shape as at Tiruttani or Tiruppachur or Tirupparuittikunram.

A like polarisation to some extent takes place even in regard to other shapes of *sikharas*, by which the Cholas, except during Raja Raja to Kulottunga times, were invariably seen in favour of circular *sikharas*, the Pandyan country mostly of the octagonal or, marginally of the square, while the western part of Tamil Nadu in western Tiruchchi District, Salem, Coimbatore, etc., were in favour mostly of the square *sikhara*. It should be noted that by and large in Karnataka, southern *vimanas* are of the square type (except the oldest in each zone which are generally of the octagonal) and circular *sikhara* was virtually in traces only as at Mallikarjuna temple at Pattadakkal. These were clearly regional and special guild mannerisms and were part of the polymorphism of architectural traditions.

Pandya rock-cut art

The early Pandyas of Madurai had an important role in initiating a rock-cut and a subsequent stone structural phase, similar to and essentially posterior to Pallavas in the former stage and of a vanguard character in granite craftsmanship of the latter stage, in the areas south of the Kaveri river. These two schools, virtually inspired the others in the buffer zone like the Muttarayar and the Adiyamans and indeed the Cheras as well, into like cultural activity. As many as sixty cave-temples patronised by the Pandyas and the above mentioned smaller zones could be listed as on date. The early Pandyan structural phase also coincided with the formative stage of granite structural architecture in Tamil Nadu and displayed a clear distinction from the Pallava craft-guilds, who, even after the cave-art phase in granite, reverted to sandstone for structural formulations for a pretty long time, in fact for the duration of their entire reign including the later Pallavas upto Nandivarman III.

The Chalukyan and Pallava traditions are reflected in the Pandyan cave-temple series though they expand them in several imaginative art and cult trends. A few foundation records and other inscribed data in this series facilitate a working chronological framework and developing sequence. On the present evidence the Pandyan cave-temples do not appear to have been much older than the middle of the 7th century A.D. . The early period upto the second half of the 6th century A.D. practically saw the occupation of the interior hilly tracts and rocky caverns by the mendicants and ascetic votaries of Jainism. Thus, cave-temple for Hinduism had not found their propitious moment. In fact, a few of the very earliest ones were ostensibly for Jain religion. Perhaps it was under Sendan and Arikesari Parankusa Maravarman and Kochchadayan that the country of Pandimandalam emerged as one welded whole, which the distribution of the cave-temples itself appears to support.

The Vaigai bed boulder record of the fiftieth year of Sendan (or according to some scholars, his son Maran), the same king's record at Malayadikurichchi, the Anamalai Narasimha cave-temple record (AD. 770 A.D.) and the Tirupparankunram cave record (AD. 773) both of Varaguna I, and tne same king's seventeenth and twenty-third year's records at Tirugokarnam (the *agrahara* of modern Pudukkottai) and Kudumiyamalai, and the Sittannavasal Jain cave-temple record of Srimara Srivallabha, and the Aivar Malai record of Varaguna II, are the notable landmarks in the time factor. The saint Sambanda-Appar-Kunpandya-Tirumangai-traditional synchronism coeval with the years of Pallava-Pandya clash form a different sort of sheet anchor. The reference by Tirumangai Alvar in his hymns (*Peria Tirumoli*-2nd Decad-9th *Tirumoli*) to important battles like Karuvur, Mannai, Neduvayal, Nenmeli, etc., and the mention of these very battles in the famous Sinnamanur Plates ascribing these victories to the time of Maravarman Rajasimha, against Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (a younger contemporary himself of Tirumangai) would tend to add a histriographic backbone to the art argument.

A feature strikingly apparent from the distribution map of the rock-cut temples in Tamil Nadu is that about the entire run

of the early Pallava cave-art, of the 6th and the 7th century A.D. is found upto Pennar Valley and the only exception was the Tiruchchirapalli cave-temple of Mahendra. The exception proved the rule that Kaveri was understood then as the traditional southern boundary of the Pallava empire in Tondaimandalam while the stretch between the Kaveri and the Pennar was a virtual corridor of bilateral movement and except for a stray effort for a cave-temple at Tiruvellarai just north of Kaveri and a structural temple in the time of Nandivarman III at Tiruppattur on the Perambalur upland, we have no movement of any power. The poised presence of the Tiruchchirappalli cave of Mahendra was on a selection of appropriate rock for the effort and also to supplant the jain patronage of the yesteryear, also on the same hill, by implanting of the brahmanical divine abode. This was a characteristic feature of all Mahendra's cave-temple sites. Additionally Kaveri was an equally well honoured political northern boundary for the Pandyas of Madurai, who in their turn, used the Pudukkottai upland which grades into the Kaveri valley, as the friendly corridor for its fraternal movements, with the Muttarayar of Kana Nadu whose delta kingdom lay around Thanjavur and Nemam and who controlled the upland from a secondary seat of power at Vallam. That the Kaveri basin was throbbing with much religious structural activity is well-indicated by Mahendra's own reference in his Tiruchchirapalli cave record (*Kaviri-n-nayana bhiramamaduram-arama-maladharam*) which in a later day was garnished by the Anbil Plates of Sundara Chola who spoke of A itya I Chola having built a string of tall stone temples along the banks of Kaveri in the Chola country, notwithstanding the hyperbole implicit in this laudatory bit.

Be this as it may, till even the Chalukyan invasion in the reign of Pallava Paramesvaravarma I (AD. 672-700), under Vikramaditya I (AD. 655-81), conquest of Kanchi and extirpation of Mamalla's lineage for a while, the aggression did not proceed beyond Pambur (Uragapura) near Kumbakonam in A.D. 674, as mentioned in his Gadwal Plates. It was only in the reign of Nandivarman II (AD. 731-96) that a deliberate engagement across the river Kaveri by Pandya Maravarman Rajasimha (AD. 730-65) took place and the Pallava sovereign tasted several bitter defeats

at the hands of his Pandya rival. The outermost time limit for the end of Kaveri as a nominal border was around the time of Nripatunga whose friendly Pandyan contemporary was Varaguna II (AD. 862-885) and others were Aditya I Chola and Ganga Prithvipati. It is these foursome that were primarily involved in the Sripurambiam battle in which the former two were routed.

The shrine schemes

In so far as ritual elements are concerned, the Pandyan rock-cut enterprises had several variant modes, identifiable from those of the Pallavas. The Tiruchchirapalli lower cave-temple and the Tiruvellarai unfinished cave with in the outer *prakara* of the Vishnu temple here, are among the earliest models. What was essentially planned here is a long hall with two shrines at either end against the middle of the width with or without a porched front within the excavation and providing, as in the former finished example, a series of large wall panel carvings of standing divinities of lesser status, forming the main nuclues of the Brahmanical pantheon of the age—the *shanmata* or six fold cult nexus—comprising Skanda, Surya, Ganesa, and Durga. The two end shrines are for Vishnu and Siva, the latter, not yet shown in the *linga* form as was indeed in the subsequent Pandyan cave-art vogue. From this the model develops further elements integrated with indigenous religious propensities as at Tirupparankunram where in the 6th year of Varaguna I, apart from a similar set up for opposed Siva-Vishnu shrines, and Ganesa, Durga Karttikeya, there was the addition for three female elements, namely Gajalakshmi, Jyestha and Bhuvanesvari (Sarasvati). This was clearly a cross fertilization of the folk and canonical *milieu*. Here we anticipate. The most valuable foundation record of the Pandyan cave at Malayadikurichchi (Tirunelveli District), seemingly of Maran Sendan (A.D. 640-691) of the Vaigai-bed record, in his 17th year, justified by its palaeography, gives us information about the rock-temple that was built by a local chieftain. It does not specify either the deity or the religion and from internal evidence and the fact that a loose (and not a rock-cut) *linga* is also found the sanctum here, would seem to suggest that here as also at Chokkampatti, where a more ostensibly Jain cave-temple with

persuasively Jain carvings are also seen albeit in an incompletely excavated temple-we have two opposed shrines not unlike the Tiruchchirappalli lower cave pattern. We are thus tempted to think in terms of two phases in early Pandyan cave-art, pre-Brahmanical (essentially Jain) and Brahmanical. The next large scale activity is in the mid-late 8th century A.D. at Anamalai, Tirupparankunram Kudumiyamalai, Tirumalapuram, Sevilipatti, Tirumalai, etc., followed by a terminal group at Virasikhamani, Tirrukkalakkudi, terminating with the unique monolithic effort at Kalugumalai at the very turn of the 8th-9th century.

We should, in the meanwhile, learn about the cave-art activities in the nursery zone of early architecture on the Muttarayar tract and four centres in this zone show the deep involvement of Pandyan cave architecture. They are Kudumiyamalai, Tirumayam, Malayakkoil and Tirugokarnam. The element that binds these together is the musical inscription engraved originally at or near the cave-temple in *all* these places but which is now present for us only at Kudumyamalai. The record purports to explain the special musical notations composed and organised for special stringed as well as vocal music by a local specialist as in the colophon to this musical tract which is arranged in seven sections, each with several subsections and each subsection with sixteen sets of four *svaras* each. The classification is under seven specific heads namely *Madhyama grama, sadja grama, sadaba, sadharita, Panchama* and *Kaisika Madhyama*. While a cognate record at Malayakkoil carried an inscribed passage referring to Gunasana who systematised a vogue in favour of the *Parivadini* knowledge which had set (*Gunasena pramanan jeida vidya parivadini karkappaduvadu kan)*, the colophon to the musical record at Kudumiyamalai explicitly refers to *'Sri Rudracharya Sishyena Paramamahasvarena rajna sisya hitartham Kritah svaragamah'*. The code word *'parivadini'* is itself engraved at Tirugokarnam, Tirumayam and Malayakkoil within a rectangular border. While Kudumiyamalai with its cave-temples and its records is clearly Pandya In origin, it is at Tirumayam, we have certain other ancillary details of interest. Tirumayam had two Muttaryar cave-temples, not counting the third, smaller one (which also carves the *parivadini* label). One of the shrines is for Vishnu Anantasayi, sung by Tirumangai Alvar and the other for Siva. The former has a record referring to its repairs by one Perumpidugu Perundevi,

queen of Videlvidugu Vilupperadi arayar, during the time of her son. The cave-temple, thus was already one generation earlier in its origin. This king was a contemporary of Nandivarman II Pallvamalla and Maravarman Rajasimha Pandya. The Siva cave shrine a little further to the east adjoining Vishnu shrine had the long musical record as at Kudumiyamalai but these got erased in the medieval times, during the time of one Appanna Dandanayaka, a military commander of the Hoyasala Vira Ramanatha during his temporary sway over central Kaveri Valley including Srirangam. The Tirumayam Vishnu Anantasayi carving is the larget and the most comprehensive essaying in the theme including dozens of subsidiary figures around the main god, in the entire country, while, the Siva shrine has the lingodbhava facing the sanctum from the *mandapa*-wall opposite occurring for the first time, after it has been seen in the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi.

The factors involved in the stylistic impacts of art in the lower Tamil Nadu in the 8th century A,D. may now be examined in some detail.

While in the post-Mahendra period, all Pallava cave-temples develop the entablatures and its minute details on the analogy of structural architecture, in the non-Pallava cave-temples south of Kaveri, the natural scarp of the rock is left undressed and thus does not show any lineal obligation to the Pallava developments.

The pillars though in their plainer types continue the Pallava massive pillars, its variety and analogues with Chalukyan counterparts is explicit.

The provision of panel carvings on the walls of the *mandapa* of the cave excavation is not known in pre-Mamalla excavation (except at Tiruchchirappalli Gangadhara carving) and is on the other hand a Chalukyan vogue. The Pandyas show it in most of their temples.

The sanctum of the Pandya cave-temple has no Somaskanda panel, but a monolithic presence of the *linga* with *pitha* in form ranging from square through octagonal to circular forms, It has

also an invariable projection of the plinth and front wall corners of the cella.

The Pandyans, like the Pallavas, however, excavated large, medium, as well as small rock-cut temples. In that process, they also introduced carvings of subsidiary shrine niches or regular cella on the outer rock wall adjacent to the main excavation which is usually not seen in the Pallava efforts other than for *davarapalas* except in one case namely the Vallam cave (near Chingleput) where Ganesa-Jyestha niche caves were cut just outside the main medium sized excavation and was itself most likely to have been a subsequent non-Pallava addition. The Ganesa-Jyestha pairing outside the main cave is indeed a Pandyan formula and both divinities were virtually unknown in Tondaimandalam in the cave stage. The Pandyan examples have a wider range of such exterior locations for Vishnu, Saptamatrikas, Ganesa, Jyestha, etc. The projection of the under side of the cornice emphatically beyond the pillar projection in the non-Pallava instances and the depiction of additional carved *Kodungai valabhi* features on the inner face of the cornice, are seen both in Pandya and in Adiyaman examples.

The *mukhamandapa* and sometimes sanctum itself has screen wall separations on the sides, following Chalukyan tradition, in Pandyan, Muttarayar and Adiyaman examples as at Anamalai Narasimha cave, Malayadipatti Anantasayi cave and Namakkal caves respectively. The comparatively high ceiling of the cave-temples in the Pandyan or other caves should be contrasted with the generally lower ceilings, and should indicate not merely a more confident granite cutting but also a nearness in time to structural models. The cave-temples of the Pandyan and others as compared with the Pallavas, are located at *all levels* of a chosen hillock. The caves of the Pallavas except at the Orukal mandapam cave at Tirukalukunram and the famous Tiruchchirappalli cave of Mahendra Pallava, were confined to the foot of the hill.

The carved monolithic nandi aligned to the main deity and located in the outer hall is unheard of in the Pallava group but is almost a familiar device in the Pandyan and Muttaryarar

efforts. Nandi as such, at the same time, often features in the Somaskanda panel in the Pallava rock-cut art of the post-Mamalla stage. This again brings those non-Pallava examples that have Nandi in the outer hall nearer to the *Agamic* and structural phase.

Taking Tamil Nadu and Kerala as a whole, the stage of inception of the cave-temple model may be fixed around A.D. 600 and the Pallavas give this up by the early 8th century A.D. A certain degree of overlap is seen in the south Tamil Nadu efforts under Pandyas and others and they have their terminal examples carried upto *C*. A.D. 800 leading to the Kalugumalai monolith and indeed the structural stone temples as seen at Panangudi, Kaliyapatti, Visalur, Viajayalayacholisvaram, Enadi, etc., on the next finite stage in the middle to late 9th century A.D. The monolithic double storeyed *Dravida Vimana* with octagonal *sikhara* at Kalugumalai, is a landmark in the stage reached by *C. A*.D. 800 in the structural formulation in the region in mixed stone and brick style and when granite temples begin, these are found to be of a fairly systematised layout and elevation. Within this range of A.D. 675-800, we can divide the cave efforts into those with aniconic or rock-cut *linga* on square *pitha* or with carved panels and stele in the sanctum. In this respect. they seem to have been generally and notionally affiliated to the north Tamil Nadu trends although they graduate quickly over the initial archaisms. The presence of Ganesa carvings from Tiruchchirapalli lower cave itself places the Pandyan efforts as having had direct link with the Chalukyan. Even the eastern wing of the Chalukyas come in for some imitation at the hands of the Pandyas in their rock cut stage as for instance ; the knob like corners on the junction between *saduram* and *kattu* of the massive pillars found at Vijayavada, Mogalrajapuram, Undavalli, etc., and repeated at Anamalai and Tiruttangal. These, indeed, tend to give a firm later limit to the concerned eastern Chalukyan cave efforts themselves which were earlier attributed to Vishnukundins arbitrarily, and date them upto the second half of the 8th century on the above features.

A characteristic of the Pandyan cave-temples for Saivism

namely the rock-cut *linga* with its *pitha*, directly linking them with Chalukya and early Rashtrakuta efforts, is a also seen at least in one of the examples in Tondaimandalam namely the Melacheri cave-temple (Sikhari Pallavesvaram). Its inscribed record would seem to refer to a Chandraditya who apparently had some bearing upon the person of the same name who was one of the sons of the Pulakesin II. This Melacheri *linga* is octagonal and totaly un-Pallava, and together with the Singavaram Anantasayi cave, temple near by, represents a late 7th century A.D. non-Pallava group, located in Tondaimandalam and not participating in the Pallava ethos but rather in peripheral movement. The octagonal *linga* in a structural temple of the Banas at Velakanampudi near Tiruttani of the mid 9th century A.D. on the one hand, and Pandyan octagonal *linga* at Malayakoil on the other indicate the common pool.

Separate cave-temples for subsidiary divinities like Karttikeya as at Anamalai (Ladankoil) and Kalugumalai (Kalugachalesvara cave-temple) which form a terminal group in tha cave effort are again noted only in the Pandyan area and not in the Pallava.

Based on these and other internal stylistic data, we may perhaps be in a position to separate the cave-temples at Malayadikuricchi, Vadikkottai, Chokkampatti (unfinished) Tiruchchirapalli Lower Cave, Tiruvellarai (unfinished), Tirupparankunram, Kudumiyamalai, Malayakoil (small), Tirugokarnam, Kunnattur and Kunnakkudi as the earliest group ranging, in that order, from the second quarter of the 7th century A.D. to the late 8th century A.D. As already stated, some of the earliest might have been for Jain religion as at Malayadikurichi and Chokkampatti and in that respect would bring out three facets of preservation .of the socio-cultural tracts namely, a cave-temple at Chokkampatti began early but could not be completed (seemingly because of the cessation of Jain patronage by then suddenly); a cave-temple at Malayadikuricchi where an erstwhile finished Jaina cave-temple had been altered and tailored to the new demands of Brahmanical religion; and the one complete in all respects at Vadikkottai, which still does not provide for any regular carved monolithic object in the sanctum but shows otherwise unhindered brahmanical usage

from the start, and a portable *linga*, as at Malayadikurichchi, was the vogue.

In view of the very large number of Pandya and Muttarayar cave-temples which show direct nexus, we are able to analyse them from several angles in regard to the religious and architectural categories. Their diversification is indeed most eloquently suggestive of a period of great inspired activity coeval with structural temples on perishable media.

The main contribution of the Pandyan cave-art is two fold, firstly the prolific use of the monolithic *linga*-on-*pitha* form, in its variations of square, octagonal and circular *pitha* types, and secondly the iconographic diversification showing *Tandava* Siva (almost invariably *maru-kal* and of *chatura* type) standing Vishnu' as Garudantika (for which we have the Pallava analogy on the north wall of Arjuna Ratha), Lingodbhava, Umasahita, not to mention the ubiquitous Anantasayi and Narasimha. The Varaha and Trivikrama are practically unseen in the Pandyan examples, though seen in the Muttarayar Vishnu cave-temple at Malayadipatti, nor are the other, Siva forms like Aridhanari, Kalari, Tripurari seen. Lakulisa is, present at Arittapatti and Devarmalai, Dakshinamurti is seen in the Kalugumalai monolith and in paint in Tirunandikara cave-temple and in a panel sculpture at Irunilamcode in Kerala, Harihara and Ardhanari are also seen.

Of the cave shrines, without *linga* in the sanctum, the examples at Tirumalai and Piranmalai, stand out. Both of them have Umasahita Siva panel on the back wall of the sanctum—seemingly inspired by the early vogue of Somaskanda panel in the Pallava sanctum. The pedestal for these cella images, however, is plain and non-descript in double step, the lower serving as the foot rest for the *ardhaparyanka* form of the god and consort. Unique, however, is Siva holding the right hand of Uma (seated to his left) by his own left hand, in *panigrahana mudra* at Tirumalai, though both are seated.

There is an analogy for this at Ellora in Dasavatara Cave in the Kalyanasundara panel, but the Pandyan example is not a Kalyanasundara or Alingana Chandrasekhara but only an Uma-sahita Siva form, locally called Minakshi-Sundaresvara. This cave-temple shows on its inner back wall; the relief panel of standing Karttikeya with a *gana* holding a parasol over his head.

On the basis of temporal evolution and diffusion, the Pandyan cave series would have entailed the effort of a full century of labour under ideal circumstances and if Anamalai and Tirupparankuram represent a firm posterior limit for the end of cave-art and inception of monolith on the way to structural erections, the beginnings of the rock-cut temple enterprise should have legitimately begun already in the last quarter of the 7th century, at the latest.

The cave-temple at Tirukkalakudi would warrant special mention with its monolithic nandi, saptamatri and Ganesa niches on the outer flanks, for the *makara torana* over the lintel of the door frame-a feature which is seen at Kudumiyamalai and—also for the lack of *dvarapalas* here. Its front court besides is at a lower level. The double ripple of curves of the *kapota* of the facade is also peculiar, However, the sculptured figures on the side walls of its *mandapa*, recall those of Virasikhamani, elsewhere in the Pandyan country, at Kunnandarkoil in the Muttarayar region of Pudukkottai and Kaviyur in Kerala. The cave-temple is perhaps placeable in the early part of the 8th century A.D.

Siva cave-temples dominate in the Pandyan region while Vishnu shrines were to be seen only at Anamalai, and Tiruttangal, though Muttarayars had them at Tirumayam and Kunnandarkoil and the Adiyas exclusively at Namakkal. The Narasimha temple is historically precious as it not only mentions in its foundation record the excavation at the hands of the *Uttaramantrin* of Pandya Varaguna I and hailing from Karavandhapura (in modern Ukkirankottai in Tirunelveli District) and since he could not consecrate it and passed away before that, his younger brother completed the finish of the facade *mandapa* and consecrated it. This Karavandhapura *vaidyakula* was also responsible for the

patronage at Tirupparankunram as seen in the sanskrit record. However, the name of the *uttaramantrin* of Anamalai cave-temple as Maran Kari raises the issue if he was the same as Nammalvar the early Vaishnava saint who went by that name.

Kalugumalai monolith

The 'Vettuvankoil' at Kalugumalai is unique for the region. The mode of scooping a monolithic excavation from out of a trench was quite visibly inspired by the great Kailasa monolith of the Rashtrakutas at Ellora, notwithstanding the softer trap rock there and the harder granite here in Pandimandalam. The style was an amalgam of Deccani trends (especially in figure modelling) and of an indigenous architectural idiom. The presence of the '*hara*' continuing over the front *mandapa* roof was Chalukyan though the typical *sukanasa* for the tower is understandably absent here. The absence of the *kutas* and *salas* in the top *tala* which carries an authentic early octagonal *sikhara*, and the presence of nandi on the four corners of the *pidhana phalaka* shows a formally evolved stage, beyond the mid 7th century A.D. The lack of any monolithic *linga pitha* in the sanctum was also admittedly a canonical concession in this structural model in a monolith. Its location in the very centre of Pandyan country and its stylistic structural trend which is non-Pallava was symptomatic of the stage when the free-standing structural temple is about to be launched in this zone. Its plinth and ground floor wall are seen unfinished but the bold and impressive cornice, with its scroll ornamentation in the central and corner zones, its *nasikas* with open *kudu* forms, the *arpita* or *applique* type of its *hara*, the sagging nature of the upper outline of the *sala* imitating realistically the bamboo or timber prototype, and the non-availability of the finial should all be duly noted as trend-setters. The *vimana* deities show Dakshinamurti on the south (with a rare Mridanga Dakshinamurti type there), Narasimha to the west, Brahma to the north and Umasahita Siva to the east. Though no foundation records exist on this monolith, inscriptions of Varaguna I are available in the group of jain relief carvings seen not far away on the same hill-face. The short recession of the *mukhamandapa* is an original feature. The blend of Chalukya-Rashtrakuta idioms found here, would suggest that during the

compaign of Kochchadayan Ranadhira and Maravarman Rajasimha in the Karnataka, they should have been exposed to the impacts of Deccani guilds.

The Chera cave art phase

The passes in the Western Ghats which link Kerala with Tamil plains, should have relieved the relative isolation of the Chera tract even in the past and towards the north, it allowed Karnataka to influence its art. though it did develop certain distinct mannerisms of its own. The Chera (Kerala) cave-temples of which about ten exist, are distributed accordingly in three groups, the southern most, across the Aramboli (Aralvaymoli) pass in Venad or the erstwhile Travancore region, being at Bhutapandi, Tirunandikara, Vilinjam and Tuvarankadu, the central group at Kaviyur, Kottukal and Airurpara (or Madavurpara), all north of Trivandrum across the Ariyankavu pass, while the northern group, found at Irunilamcode, Trikkur and Branthanpara are relatable to the Peermade - Munar pass. Of the last mentioned, Trikkur (Ernakulam District) is the most important and the largest. Its outstanding features are its detachable *linga* on a monolithic square *pitha*, the orientation of the water-chute of the *pitha* to the north - the entrance direction of the cave-temple—thus making the *linga* itself face properly east, the carving of *dvarapala* in three quarter relief on the side walls of the cella chamber and not on the outer walls flanking the door, the cella being entered not by a single door but by a pillared facade with three bays, whose pillars have a *taranga* or wavy corbel of the voluted type, the Ganesa sculpture in the north-west wall niche in the cella, all these eke out its nexus clearly with the early Chalukyan usages, making the cave-shrine ascribable to the early 8th century A.D. if not slightly earlier. The other example at Irunilamcode (Trichur District) is distinguished by double opposed shrines for Siva and Vishnu, although these two are no more than niches, Siva being represented by a *linga* and the back wall having Dakshinamurti image in unconventional and lively pattern. The cave-temple is facing north but the Dakshinamurti on the back wall is made to imply its location on the south wall of the shrine (and seemingly oriented south also) It is datable to the last quater of the 8th century A.D. The third example at Branthanpara near Shoranur

was just commenced and shows the technique of rock-scooping similar to the Pallavas and the provision for niches of Saptamatrika and Ganesa on the outer flanks.

The examples of the central Kerala group have strong Pandyan influence except for two factors : the *linga* is often of the *arsha* type with a tapering top and the *pitha* is of multiple cut stone masonry blocks, which we see at Tirunandikara also. The provision for *pitha* in two or three parts to be assembled inside the cella during the consecration is essentially a 9th century practice, of the peripheral regions of Tamil Nadu. However, three distinctive features link them closely and directly with Pandyan country. These are : the carving of ascetic like figures on the side walls of the *mandapa*, compared to that at Tirukkalakudi, Kunnandarkoil and Virasikhamani in Tamil Nadu ; the provision of a separate pedestal for the niche carving is, however, original to Kaviyur. The Kottukal type is the most impressive correlation of themes - represented in the depiction of Hanuman as *dvarapala*-seemingly assumed by Nandi, a feature which occurs in a more impressive size on the door flanks of the cella at Kunnattur cave near Madurai. The corbel type at Kottukal is of the simple bevel type. It has further a monolithic nandi also. The Hanuman *dvarapala* seemingly as a reflection Nandi's location, is inspired by Hanuman having been considered as a manifestation of Nandi, as recalled by Ravana when Hanuman visits his court before the burning of Lanka. At Airurpara, the *linga* is an *arsha* or archaic type and Vishnu and Ganesa carvings are shown on the wall, recalling similar usage at Sevilipatti, and Tirumalapuram. The southern group again shows an archaic *linga* at Bhutapandi (now in Tamil Nadu) which is rather a diminutive cave excavation. But its architectural details like the jointly cut lintel and side corbels of wall pilasters in the front *mandapa* are of interest, while the example at Tirunandikara-an excavation of the time of Vikramaditya Varaguna the Ay king is satisfying, with a composite masonary *linga pitha* and detachable *linga* as at Kaviyur, a side-facing shrine and ceiling in the *mandapa* whose back walls carried extensive mural paintings in the past, coeval with the excavation, of which only the bare outer lines of a Dakshinamurti is now visible in parts. The third example of the southern group is the niche cave on a boulder

at Vilinjam, a seaport town 8 miles (14.8 Km.) south of Trivandrum, a scene of battle between Pandyas and Ay kings and containing some beautiful figures of Siva as Tripurarimurti and a dancing form on either flank of the front face respectively.

The key note of the Kerala group of cave temples is its variability, heterogeneity, originality and differential impacts from the Chalukyan and the mainland Pandya zones on its art-matrix.

B. Early Structural Stages

Pallava period

The range and gamut of structural temple design under the Pallavas may now be briefly documented. They were all confined to Tondaimandalam. They were almost all of them rendered in sandstone except those at Mahabalipuram of the early Pallava stage of Rajasimha and those on the western periphery like Tiruttani, Nenmeli, Velakanampudi, etc., which, having come under the influence of the Banas, Vaidumbas and the aggressive Cholas who involved them all, could dabble in the granite medium. Such a rendering in granite, in Tondaimandalam until the 9th-10th or even 11th century A.D. should have been rather out of the ordinary, the norm being either sandstone or a mixed medium (*misra*) of some ;type of local stone for the ground floor and stucco and brick for the superstructure. This is well brought out by the fact that inscriptions of builders and donors who employed the hardstone make a special reference to this, as in the case of the Virattanesvara temple at Tiruttani recorded therein as built by Nambi Appi in the 18th year of the Aparajita Pallava, in granite stone, or in the case of the reconstruction of the apsidal temple at Tiruvorriyur on the outskrits of Madras, which is recorded as having been built by Rajendra Chola in '*krishna sila*' or black granite stone.

That the most early structural expermentation was for a *mandapa* type, there can be no doubt. The analogy was available in cave and monolithic art also and is the safest for first faltering stages. Our evidence, in this regard, for the Pallavas, is eloquently brought out by the Chittoor Copper plate grant of Nripatunga. This mentions that Narasimhavarman I Mamalla

built a sleeping chamber shrine for Vishnu on the fringe of the sea there, out of stones (*asmabhih*) seemingly to emphasize by the plural employed, the structural character of the temple as contrasted, with monolithic art, where such 'plural' might be singularly inapt. We know that the Talasayana shrine, sandwiched between the twin Shore Temples should be the one referred to here. This God has been carved on the rock in monolithic technique but above the plinth the temple should have contained a pillared chamber for the God, the superstructure being yet in brick thus urging Rajasimha to restore the chamber for this God, while building his larger Shore Temple, around its *pradakshina* circuit where this Vishnu was located.

After this landmark of Mamalla, the next important structural enterprise was the apsidal temple at Kuram by Paramesvaravarman I, as mentioned in his Kuram Plates, and called as Vidyavinita pallavesvaragriham. This temple again was of stone in the plinth and ground floor but was seemingly of wood and tile for the superstructure. What more, the plinth was itself of a 'boxed' technique, with solid brick masonry core and veneering with slabs cut in small pieces, course by course, and boxed around the brick hearting. This was a technique that was seen prevalent in the Ikshvaku structures at Nagarjunakonda, as in the apsidal Pushpabhadraswami temple, built by Ehavala Chantamula in the 4th century A.D. This composite temple plinth is extant till today, but the wall and superstructure has been renovated in later times. The use of tiles (and by implication timber also) is inferred by the reference in Paramesvara's copper plate to an endowment of land for a specific kiln which will make brick and tiles necessary for the temple,

The first confident creations in all stone structural style, though yet in coarse granite or sandstone interleavened with granite plinth to help in recording inscriptions and to bear the stress which might pulverise the sandstone material as time passed, belong only to Rajasimha's time, when we have a spurt of structural activity. As many as four major temples were constructed at Mahabalipuram besides six or seven more at Kanchipuram, including the Rajasimhesvara or Kailasanatha temple complex and one more at Panamalai, during his rule. The

later Pallavas, beginning with Nandivarman II Pallavamalla, were responsible for an equally large number of temples, of which Vaikunthaperumal temple, Muktesvara and Matangesvara at Kanchi are of Nandivarman II, and Sundaravarada temple at Uttiramerur and perhaps the Pundarikaksha temple at Tiruvellarai in Tiruchchi District, and the Aivarkoil at Kodumbalur under the Irukkuvel vassals, all of the time of Dantivarman. We have also inscribed evidence that might ascribe a temple at Tiruchanur (near Tirupati) to the latter, probably the Panchavira temple of Venugopala near the Padmavati Tayar temple at that place. Of the time of Nandivarman III, we have the Kailasanatha temple at Tiruppattur (near Perambalur in Tiruchchi District) built of sandstone in four *talas* and with a *dharalinga* in the *sandhara* sanctum. Nripatunga, Kampavarman and the latter's son Aparajita have their basic temple munificences noticed at Bahur, Tiruchchennampundi, Narttamalai, (Paliyiliccuram) Kavantandalam, Uttiramerur, Tiruvorriyur, Kaveripakkam, Sumangali, Natteri, Tiruttani, Nenmeli, Velakanampudi and Takkolam. Some of these temples have been repaired or rebuilt during the Chola times. The last two appear to have been by the Bana feudatories of the Pallavas.

We should note that the early Pallava structural temple, until the close of the time of Rajasimha, did not use a *linga*, had only a Somaskanda panel on the back wall for worship, did not have any exterior projecting water chute for *abhisheka* water on the top of the plinth, there was no *upapitha*, as a rule, until the time of Nandivarman II, both *sandhara* (with inner covered ambulatory circuit) and *nirandhara* (without such a device and to be circumbulated only on the open outer court) were common, the former device, largely for the principle of *Kadalikakarana* or corbelling through the cellular wall base, for the support of the heavy superstructural load. Both *arpita* (applique) and *anarpita* (separated) *hara* parapets of the successive *prastaras* (entablatures) were common, the former indicative generally of the latter stage already having been gone through and conventionalised for structural purposes in the former). The *sikhara* shape had alreadv got variegated into the *Dravida* (octagon), *Nagara* (square) and *Vesara* (circular or apsidal) shapes in that order of introduction. The first circular *sikhara* came only in the period of Nandivarman II, as

at Muktesvara, *Upapitha* also started only in his reign, as a rule. A *dhara linga* (or faceted *linga* in increasing multiples of four from the base or multiple flutes all through) gets introduced from *C*. A.D. 725 and continues for almost the entire later Pallava period upto the end of the 9th century A.D., whereafter they get superseded by regular Chola type *lingas* everywhere as the only object of worship. Simultaneously, there is also a *pranala* or projecting water chute on the plinth edge on the exterior for ritual bath water. Somaskanda figure gets modified into Umamahesvara and finally disappeared along with this stage. Umamahesvara panel on back wall are seen at Tiruvadigai and Velakanampudi, while all the temples outside Kanchi or Mahabalipuram do not show any Somaskanda or other image, after the time of Nandivarman II. In Chola-mandalam under the Pallavas, as at Kodumbalur (Aivarkoil) or Narttamalai, *linga* had been introduced, mostly with square *pitha* below it, from the time of Dantivarman and circular later on.

The pillars of a Pallava structural temple show seated or couchant lions upto the time of Paramesvara and standing or rampant lions, from the time of Rajasimha. The pillar-order-includes a shaft, *malasthana, padmabandha, kalasa, tadi, kumbha, padma, phalaka, virakantha, bodhika* (usually of the *taranga* or wavy corbel type, sometimes with a medium band). This last detail was common, broadly speaking, with Chalukyas as well as early Pandyas and is so utilised in the early Chola temples, also, virtually, with all the other elements of the pillar also, as an integral stylistic borrowal. The Pallava temples further utilise *bhutavalabhi* under the edge of the *sikhara* flange. The plinth of a Pallava temple throughout does not show the *vedi* element, above the *pattika* or *kapota* or *vyalavari*, as the case may be, as the top most member. Further, it generally revels in *pratibandha* (using *jagati, tripattakumuda, kantha* and *pattika*) or *padmabandha* using unscallopped *padma* with continuous apron edge, *tripatta kumuda* and *vyalavari;* but generally it does not use *pada bandha* (using generally *padma* or *jagati* with *vritta kumuda* and *vyalavari*), it does not show any *vyalavari* on the entablature, but only a prototype rafter scheme, while the Pandya temples show the full *vyala* animal row in lateral scheme, and the Cholas prefer an ubiquitous *vyala* head in facing and opposed rows whether on the plinth or entablature of the ground and upper *talas*.

Early Structural stages

Pandyan contributions

The Pandyan stage also almost closely displays a cultural common pool with the Pallava tradition, both having been brought up in overlapping and common rock-art and monolithic traditions. The outstanding achievement of the early Pandyan structural art is that it steadily stuck on to the granite medium throughout and hence was also the first to experiment on a structural stone temple in granite, unlike the Pallavas who continued with sand-stone raw materials almost without break, notwithstanding specific employment of granite in cave-art stage. This might be due to the lack of capacity or confidence of the Pallava craftsman for quarrying beams of sufficient span which could bear the upper load. The Pandyan craftsmen excelled in just this and graduated in structural temples quickly by trial and error. Pallava craftsmen had no doubt produced sufficiently long pillars in some places as Manimangalam near Kanchi (in the ruins in front of the dilapidated Vishnu temple in the heart of the village) but they did not confidently employ beams of granite in any of the cases known. Often, they adopted brick and timber superstructure. The Pandyan style further adopted a specific mannerism in pillar order or plinth, or layout design or *sikhara* shape and mostly stuck to it, although they had elaborated the temple model into several varieties. The *ashtaparivara* scheme was first adopted by the Pandyas, out of the devices employed in cave-art stage, and compact examples of this can be seen at Kaliapatti. They were also the first to introduce *svayampradhana* divinities out of the subsidiary gods like Subrhamanya, as at Kannanur. Their plinth formula was either *pratibandha* or *Padmabandha*. The former was ubiquitously employed, while the latter is seen in Vadakkadam temple (which is the original sanctum of the Suchindram temple, Kanyakumari district, as seen from the inscriptions on the boulder near this shrine). Nanjil Nadu which formed the southern most part of Pandyan kingdom was under the Ay Kings but under the control of the Pandyas and was fully influenced by them in art and architecture, as seen already in the cave-art stage, in the examples at Tirunandikara, Vilinjam, Bhutapandi, etc. The Pandyan plinth, when it does not show a full animal *vyalavari* shows the rafter course with terminals chamfered carefully into pyramidal tips.

This is seen in the entablatures also and becomes a convenient device to diagnose a Pandyan structure, even upto the early medieval times. The Pandyan temples do not show *kosthadevatas* on the walls of the ground floor, but only in the *kosthas* of the superstructure. They generally prefer to show *makara toranas*, however, around false niches or central zones of the pilastered walls of the ground floor. The *makara torana* device is widely employed elsewhere also in Pandyan art, as in the separation of the *mahamandapa* at the beam level in the Talinatha temple at Tiruppattur (Ramanathapuram district) which is one of the oldest all granite three storeyed Pandyan temples. Elsewhere, *makara torana* is also employed for the sanctum sanctorum front beam in the cave shrine stage, as either at Kudimiyamalai cave-temple or at Tirukkalakkudi cave-temple.

The Pandyan iconography invariably includes Jyestha, Durga, Saptamatrikas, Ganesa and Karttikeya, from the earliest cave-art stage continuing into the structural stage. They, therefore, account for the earlier examples of Ganesa, Jyestha, etc., in Tamil Nadu Tondaimandalam did not actually practice Ganesa worship till late Rajasimha stage and had none of Jyestha at all, notwithstanding its outlandish use at Vallam cave near Chingleput, as a later addition perhaps in the 9th century A.D. during Varaguna-Nripatunga political comradeship.

The Pandyan temple invariably opted either for a *Dravida sikhara* or a *Nagara sikhara* and had no preference for *Vesara* (circular or apsidal) *sikhara*, while the Cholamandalam (except in special cases or when in contact with others) predominantly sported the *vesara* (circular) *sikhara*. The *koshtadevatas* in Pandya kingdom are Indra on east, Narasimha on west and Dakshinamurti on the south and Brahma on north, whether it was for Vaishnavism or Saiva temples, almost throughout, except when during the Imperial Chola rule, in some cases, Lingodbhava got introduced. Otherwise, Lingodbhava was not the norm on the western niche in this region. This is especially due to the fact that it does not show the *koshthadevatas* on the ground floor and hence from the point of view of display, it became less effective.

The early distinguished examples of Pandyan structural temples after the Kalugumalai monolith stage (*C.* A.D. 800) are

now briefly dealt with. We have the Saumyanarayana temple at Tirukkoshthiyur (Ramanathapuram district) which was a triple shrine-model like the Pallava Vaikunthaperumal at Kanchi. Three such examples were created in the Pandyan country, namely that cited above, the Kudal Alagar temple at Madurai by far the largest temple of this kind and the Vishnu temple at Mannarkoil (Tirunelveli District), which was the last to be built under the Chola-Pandya viceroy period, in the 10th-11th century A.D.

The Umamahesvara shrine (near Nataraja sabha) at Uttarakosamangai (Ramanathapuram District) is ancther interesting example, where, following the Tirukkoshthiyur example of Vaishnavism, the ground *tala* was solid and the shrine was laid in the upper *bhumi* of the ground *tala*, approached by a lateral double flight of steps; and here the main deity worshipped was Umamahesvara, in a sculpture in the round. It has an antechamber, seemingly intended for Nandi. It faces east.

There is a group of less than medium sized temples, in the southern part of Pudukkottai district where the friendly Muttarayars had common border with the Pandyas. These at Panangudi, Kaliapatti, Tiruppur, Visalur and Enadi. Of these the second (already noted earlier) and the penultimate are *ashtaparivara* shrines. None of them has any *koshtas* on the ground floor, but only on the neck of the tower above. The *koshtadevatas* are also of the pre-Chola type, common with Pandyan tradition, with Brahma, Dakshinamurti, Vishnu and Indra. All have a square *sikhara* which form again was neither of the Muttaryar nor of the Chola vogue except rarely.

The last is the latest among them as it shows a *vedi* also. It seems to have had *parivara* shrines around, which are now compltely gone. It might be of the early 10th century A.D. In the lower Pandyan country at and around Tirunelveli, we have the examples of the sanctum (including its own superstructure) of Nellaiyappar temple, Tirunelveli (*C.* A.D. 875); Ten-Tirumalirun-cholai or Tennalagar temple at Sivalapperi; Kailasanatha temple at Gangaikondan; Vishnu temple at Perunkulam; Erichchavudayar temple (inside Bhuminatha temple) at Ambasamndram; Manomaya nisvaram temple and the nearby Vishnu temple at Vijayanarayanam

(near Nanguneri); Chokkalingesvara and Chokkanachchiyar (or Vadavayilamarndal) temples at Ukkirankottai; and Puvananatha temple at Koilpatti. They all show the characteristic plinth preferences, corbel forms, wall pattern, superstructural specialization and *koshtadevatas* common to Pandyas. The two gems of Pandyan structural style are however the Valisvara temple (*C.* A.D. 875-950) at Tiruvalisvaram (Tirunelveli District) and Talinatha temple at Tiruppattur (Ramanathapuram district). The former is a *tritala* temple with octagonal *sikhara*. Its sculptural sway is profound. Its Nataraja in *Ananda tandava* is perhaps one of the oldest authentic Pandyan examples *prior* to the casting of such an *icon* in bronze anywhere, in Tamil Nadu. We do have indeed a bronze image at the Nataraja *sabha* of Kuttalanatha temple at Tirukkuttalam (near Tenkasi) which bears in its *jata* devices some link with Valisvaram Nataraja and is otherwise a superb bronze of *Ananda tandava*, different from most other examples of its kind and published here for the first time (both front and rear view). It is datable to the early half of the 10th century A D.

Though pertaining to the somewhat later stage of the Imperial Chola yoke, we have temples which had seemingly been founded earlier, but had been renovated during the Chola times. One unique example is the Kallalagar temple at Alagarkoil (Tirumalirumjolai) outside Madurai, at the foot of the hill group. This shrine is a transverse ellipse in its sanctum plan, very carefully rendered, in a manner worthy of the relatively much earlier compeer of its at Srirangam, and should uphold the expert stone craftsmanship of the Pandyan region and is perhaps the only large example of this shape in Pandimandalam. The most graphic and overwhelming evidence for Pandyan stone-craft supremacy is seen in the Minakshi-Sundaresvara complex at Madurai, and the corresponding complexes at Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, Sankarankoil, etc. It is an unwritten tradition among the *sthapatis* of the Tamil country that if there was any doubt regarding granite temple constructions, they can very well get it cleared by a visit to the Pandyan *extravaganza* at Madurai. The spanning of wide stretches by beam work, kept floating by a connected series of corbel schemes camouflaged by animal and floral motifs is one of the outstanding special achievements of the Pandyan craftman which was displayed in the breathtakingly lofty and seemingly endless

corridors of the cloisters at Madurai, Ramesvaram, etc. Even when we are talking of the Vijayanagara and Nayak period in Tamil Nadu, we should realise that the developments towards giganticism and intricate craftmenship was as much an indigenous legacy in the southern Tamil Nadu, in the medieval times, as in the metropolitan Vijayanagara in Karnataka. It was because of this parallel development that a view got round amidst art-historians that the *gopuras* were alone the chief creations of the Pandyan period; and, by implicition, none of the earlier comprehensive studies of the architecture of Tamil Nadu examined what, if any, could have been the authentic developments afoot in the Pandimandalam in the entire periods between A.D. 650-925 when the first Pandyan empire was ruling in all glory and an uninterrupted art enterprise through cave and monolithic art to the structural stages was being systematically launched. Through the recent specific studies, however, such a limited theory of Pandyan art had been found untenable and an integrated assessment of the stone cutter's, stone carver's and carpenter's crafts had shown that the structural temple art of the early Pandyas had a respectable firm place under the sun, in the study of structural temple modes, models and mannerisms in Tamil Nadu, and *gopurams* had, by the same token, made their appearance in a simple and unprepossessing way right from the early Pallava structural period, as at Kailasanatha Kanchi, Shore Temple, Mahabalipuram etc., and grew in the later Pallava period as at Sundaravarada at Uttiramerur, where it has an elliptical outline and were launched, full and truly during the Imperial Chola times of the late 10th century and after, but were certaintly systematised and vigorously elaborated in the late Chola and second Pandyan empire stage. In essence, it was the Cholas who had greater expertise in brick and stucco art which goes predominently in the making of the *gopuras*, but Pandyan *gopurams* use timber work skeleton to greater success, in expanding the loftiness of the *gopurams*, as seen at the Nambi temple at Tirukkurungudi where a virtual art gallery in wood craft had been displayed in the storeyed shell of the *gopuram*. In any event, the loftiest gopuram of Tamil Nadu is to be found at Srivilliputtur (in front of the Vatapatrasayi temple) presenting a profile which is alluringly feminine in its appeal, yet withal finite in design. It is generally dated to the Nayak phase of Tamil Nadu. But *gopuram* complexes at Tiruvan-

namalai, Tirukkalukunram, Vriddhachalam, Chidambaram, Kumbakonam, etc. apart from the spectacular cluster of Madurai, do indeed partake of a common pool of craft specialization which accrued in the post-Chola period when seemingly there had been a suppersaturation of main shrines noticed all over rural Tamil Nadu, with the result that the religious patronage in art was impelled mainly to commission the grandest *gopurams* for the four gateway entrances of the temple campuses, though not always on the same size or pattern for all the gates. There is no doubt that the economic compulsions of finding dignified employment to virtually thousands of expert temple artisans and craftsmen who were on the pay-roll of temple management resulted in the requisitioning of their talent for a new and gigantic Ideal, namely, raising stately towers (apart from thousand or hundred pillared pavilions) beckoning the devotees to the heartlands of religious *ethos*; and once again, tha *sthapatis* of the Pandyan country skilled in the art of lifting stones to lofty positions, found the challenging assigments meeting their mettle. With the gopura period, however a plethora of festivals increasingly brought God's icons out of the cella, in and out of the temple campus and in the temporal organisation of these festivities to unify the masses, the priests gradually became subordinate to temple functionaries who organized the festivals and managed the temple property. Personal religion and temple symbolism was bulldozed by the leviathan of official religion soon and 'lost itself in the desert sands of dead habit'.

Early Chola temple style

There has been much debate among scholars, regarding the obligations, if any, of the early Chola temple mode, to those gone by under the Pallavas and the Pandyas, not to mention the neighbourly activities of the Muttarayars, the political buffer between the above two, and one of the vigorous *entrepreneurs* of what can indeed legitimately be called a formative granite structural phase. On the one hand, are the prominent protoganists fathering an original trend on the Cholas of the Vijayalaya line, very soon after seizure of power, on the other are those inclined towards a Pallava 'immersion-workshop' stage almost upto the end of the 9th century A.D., followed by a transition stage in the

next half-century—temporarily blighted by the traumatic Takkolam reverse. The mature and truly Chola design was ultimately born from the seventies of the 10th century A.D. Without cavilling at either of these views, we may permit ourselves to note the following points. Firstly, it is not to be gainsaid that the Cholas, prior to the rise of Vijayalaya—as now conceded—in A.D. 867, had no apprenticeship in stone temple style. The Kaverí delta area—the eastern part of which they had controlled and dug into before their Imperial rise (and not, be it noted, operating from Uraiyur, as suggested by some) had a fairly facile familiarity with a brick and stucco tradition for long. They would have, therefore, been unable to metamorphose directly into a stone-building power overnight, even granting they had access - which they did not - to good supply of quality stone. Secondly, the Pallavas who had themselves been hobnobbing with the Kaveri valley for more than a century after their graduation in their home zone in structural architecture, were seen primarily specialising in sandstone constructions, mixed judiciously with granite interleavenings in plinth. They would, hence, have been unable to inspire the Cholas with a take-off stage in hard stone. Quite obviously, on the contrary, it was their very soft stone traditions that were recaptured in brick and stucco by the Cholas. This genius for assimilation is quite apparent especially in the pillar style of the early Chola temples which shows an elaborate pillar 'order' at the very initial stage of our sighting their temples, and are clearly derivable directly from the Pallava granite pillar of Mamalla times or the metropolitan sandstone pillar style at Kanchi with (or without) a couchant lion base, shaft, *kalasa*, *tadi*, *kumbha*, *padma* and *phalaka*, complete with a volute corbel and *virakantha* beneath the beam. Even in the Pallava country, these were indeed partly imported from the Chalukyan region. Elsewhere, the Pandyan cave-art or early structural temples, which also received Chalukyan impulses do not tie themselves up to 'types' but generally keep an individualistic balance. Thirdly, what had already been achieved and is visually more than an eyeful, in the art-cocoon that was Kana Nadu area of the Muttarayars (the Pudukottai upland) could not but cast a spell. It is a slur on the Chola genius to consider that a fairly coherant bunch of small-to-medium temple formulations found in this zone as at Kalíapatti, Visalur, Tiruppur, Panangudi, Kannanur, etc., not to

mention that spectacular misnomer at Narttamalai called Vijayalayacholisvaram that was built way before Vajayalaya, did not have any effect at all on the art horizon looming before the emergent Aditya line. Carried away by the penegyric vein of Anbil Plates of the 4th year of Sundara Chola (A.D. 956–73) and leaning a shade too heavily on the palaeography and the magic of the 'Rajakesari-Paraksari' *birudas*, the distinguished doyen among epigraphists and historians, Balasubrahmaniam has, in propounding a major Aditya *milieu*, not done justice alike to the mechanics of art growth as to the patrons and art-guilds of the Aditya years and later, who carried the style to its logical maturity through stages of assimilations, experiments and innovations, culminating in the period of Raja Raja I with his *magnum opus* at Thanjavur. Art being primarily a regional motivation cannot live down easily the idioms already created in the zone. The period between A.D. 800-71 in the Cholamandalam was fraught with political ferment and cultural activation ; Pallava, Muttarayar, Paluvettarayar, Pandya, and Irukkuvel craft-guilds were freely displaying their skills, and political masters were busy expanding their patronage in the buffer zones for furthering their own ambition. In such a circumstance, with Aditya himself mostly in war array virtually from his 15th year which almost coincides, with Tiruppurambiam battle upto his whirlwind compaign and subjugation of Tondai Nadu by his 27th year (*C.* AD 898), with the remaining years of his reign and those of the early phase of Parantaka also reverberating to their wardrums against Pandyas and no less by those of Rashtrakuta Krishna III against Parantaka's successors, it is debatable if there was any well-programmed and finite, forward-looking, early-Chola structural temple model in stone emerging. It was, by and large, a congeries of parts, the assemblage of a variety of skills, and its own special contribution was the aesthetics of the 'blend' and certainly the sublimity of the icons that lend lustre to the niches on these temple walls.

To the familiar eye, it would seem that the textual traditions which have been laid down for the architectural designing of the plinth, wall and superstructure of the *southern Vimana* in the 9th century A.D., do not leave too much of a scope for startlingly fresh innovations but only a judicious filiation to the more delec-

table among the one or the other of combinations of plinth in vogue, with certain aesthetic frills added to highlight them. The Pallavas had set forth between A.D. 630 and 800, certain basic plinth types which, in textual parlance, are termed variously as the (i) *pratibandha*, (ii) *kapota bandha*, (iii) *pada bandha*, and (iv) *padmabandha* types.

One might concede immediately that the early Chola art did not outstrip or overstep the bounds laid by these four plinth designs. It is indeed manifest that before the Cholas, the early Pandyas had equally well made use of most of these idioms, the exception largely being the disinclination to use *vyalavari* in the row of leographic heads but rather as a parade of the full lateral profile of these, whether in the plinth or on the entablatures. They (Pandyas) liked as an alternative a mere wood prototype of plain chamfered rafter ends in the *varimana* course. They generally stuck to the *pratibandha* and *kapotabandha*. The Muttarayars had a partiality for *padabandha* over *pratibandha* but they had in their early stages prefered the latter or the former with a full body-profile of animals in the *varimana* course as at Paliyilichchuram of Nartta-malai. In view of the fact that *pratibandha* is a diagnostic matrix of southern *Vimana* architecture, in the entire lower southern India, it would have been an act of faith for any southern builder to adhere to it meticulously in the formative stages. But an original mannerism of early Chola architecture plumps in favour of the *padmabandha*, dovetailed with the *kapotabandha*, in several variants (either with *padma*, *vrittakumuda* and *vyalavari* or the *padma kumuda kantha* and *kapota* or *padma*, *vrittakumuda*, *kantha* and *pattika*) All these combinations, except for the replacement of *padma* by *jagati*, were already foregone traditions in the half-century after *C.* A.D. 880 ; this replacement being also shown in the Muttarayar (Kiranur, Paliyilichchuram) or in the upper Kaveri (Srinivasanallur on the Ganga border) or in the north-western Pallava periphery (Takkolam, Tondaimanarrur). There is no doubt that it is in (Kilayur-Avanikandarpesvaram), the 22nd year of Aditya I (A.D. 893) that the early Chola architecture devises its authoritative archetype. It took, however, more than forty years for this very prototype to reach upto western extremity of south Arcot in Tondaimaddalam, in the Tirumunaippadi (or 'the maginot line'

zone of Tamil Nadu against the invasions from Karnataka) as seen at Tirunamanallur Siva temple of Parantaka (A.D. 935). This if any proof is needed, will eloquently bear out the extremely slow pace of spread of fresh changes in architecture. Neither the shrine elevation nor interior plan, nor its subshrine nexus could be shorn of pre-existing traditions virtually until the time of Parantaka-notwithstanding his reign having been more turbulent and having more crises than Aditya's. The argument that the Pallava architecture or other peripheral art movements have not bequeathed anything to the Chola art *metier* has, therefore, no legs to stand upon.

There can only be one point that could be furthered against the Pallavas, if any, namely that they were not responsible for any of the developments that took place in temple archetecture from the time of the advent of Parantaka I, since by then, they had been ousted comprehensively from power, towards the close of Aditya's reign, as the combined evidence of his Tillaisthanam undated record, the Tiruvalangadu Plates of Rajendra Chola and the Kanyakumari record of Vira Rajendra Chola (A.D. 1063-69) proclaim. Aditya's policy against his erstwhile ally Aparajita and his dynastic rival Nripatunga, alongwith the fact that he was only watching from the side lines the cliash between Nripatunga and Aparajita (sided respectively by Pandya and Ganga allies) does not provide the occasion or scope for putting on the ground a chain of original temple styles of consistant characterstics.

The Chola art innovations

The new firm accessions to our knowledge, after the advent of Parantaka, in temple architecture, on the other hand are ; (i) the ambivalent promotion by him of both the Late Aditya innovative plinth pattern as well as the erstwhile *pratibandha* pattern occasionally with even an *upapitha* for the latter (as at Koviladi), the special addition of a *vedi* or *applique* parapet on top of the plinth, (which is interruppted at the niches) both of the *pratibandha* type (as at Naltunai-Isvaram at Punjai) ; the variant of this with *vritta kumuda* instead of triple-faceted one—(as at Nalur Mayanam temple) ; or to the *kapota bannha* type (as at the Brahmapurisvara temple, Pullamangai and Sadayarkoil at Tiruchennampundi)

continuing even in the next period (as at Tiruppurambiam), or to the *padma bandha* itself (as at the Dakshina Kailasa temple at Tiruvaiyaru). These are admittedly logical developments but not an organic growth of the style ; (ii) the more acute quadrantal slant of the main cornice of the ground *tala* which, in Aditya's days was always of a smooth curved profile ; (iii) a corresponding accentuated flange of the *sikhara* rim which in Aditya's days or earlier in the Muttarayar zone, was a progressive curve ; (iv) the introduction of the *kumbha-lata* decorative motif in the recesses of the wall of the ground floor with a prospect of growth in the styling of the upper end. This is indeed picked up and organically carried to an evocative degree in the Vijayanagara style, even after five hundred years and displayed well inside Karnataka region, at Hampi; and (v) the almost firm placement of *lingodbhava* carving on the western outer wall in its central (*bhadra*) niche from the end of Parantaka's reign. The periods gone before right down to the Pallavas had several varient themes for this western niche, but comprising either Vishnu or Ardhanari only. This is virtually an adumbration of the devout regard of the king (Parantaka) towards Saivism and Siva in particular, in supersession of the more elccectic earlier trends. *Linga-dhara* (or *linga*-bearing Siva) by itself, however, was a prevailing earlier icon of the early Pallavas and early Pandyas and was already a diagnostic element of Saivite faith.

Balasubramanyam and Barrett have both dealt with their views on the so-called *Saptasthana* temples of the Kaveri valley in Thanjavur district. It is possible to show that these temples could *all* be pre-Parantaka foundations since they all display either Vishnu or Ardhanari only on the western *koshtha* (except at Kandiyur), *either* of which mode was clearly a pre-Parantaka usage, continued in his time. Tondaimandalam temples coeval with Aditya I (as at Takkolam and Tiruttani) show Vishnu on the west wall, a tradition which is pre-Aditya and of Pallava origin and found throughout Tamil Nadu and in the early Pandya temples as well. It is thus appropriate to consider these two Tondaimandalam temples also as of the regional group and not specifically as of Aditya creation. The tradition of showing Karttikeya on the back wall, as at Kilayur is seemingly on the parallelism of Kilianur in South Arcot District and hence is again,

a Pallava usage already, employed during an Aditya time enterprise, by the Paluvettarayar absorption of this Pallava trend. The plinth combination of *jagati*, *vrittakumuda*, and *vyala* or *bhutavari* was a Muttarayar vogue already before Aditya's reign (as at Paliyilichchuram, Narttamalai). Thus, while the reign of Aditya, though it vigorously stimulated and amalgamated most of the then current traditions in temple building did not seek to present any architecturally distinct *new* model. Parantaka, on the other hand, is seen as having had a mojor role in consolidating the Saiva temple arts and traditions with : (i) Lingodbhava on west ; (ii) *Saptasthana* liaison ; and (iii) his activities at Chidambaram. Barrett has mechanically analysed the plinth forms and by giving special weightage to sculpture and under-playing the local initiative, works out a formal list of Aditya temples. These, however, on the above noted analysis, cannot all be foundational or stylistic creations of Aditya I. However, his use of the *koshtadevata* sculptures to exclude and shift a very large number of temples out of Balasubramanyam's list of Aditya's temples to Parantaka's times appears justified. Thus, even without any high artistic qualities, *Koshtadevata* may still serve as finite indications of the original religious trend of the age of the temple and give a convenient *line of separation* of reigns and can also serve as the rough index of architectural differentiation in the periods.

In the post-Parantaka stage, we find that external appearance of the plinth and the wall of the temple undergoes great profusion of devices, such as a fairly well-projecting *stambha panjara* with a *kapota* (cornice) and entablature on the crest, in receding sizes as one goes up the *talas* but in the same vertical line ; the *phalaka* of the pilasters becomes prominently widened ; pierced windows are introduced in the joinery between *garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa* in the *recessed* part ; the cornices of the main *tala* droop all too steeply, almost vertically with a sharp shoulder angle at the top ; the divinity carvings in niches tend to have a slant of plane by which they appear to come out of the niche with a three quarter profile for the body ; a *cyma recta* moulding is interleavened between *upana* and *jagati* (as for example at Kilappaluvur Tirualandurai Mahadeva temple and Kailasanatha temple at Sembianmadevi) ; rearing rampant *vyala* brackets (sometimes replaced by standing *nayikas* etc.) are seen at the

corners of the *sala* and *kutas* below the cornice and rising from the *phalaka* , and the *stambha panjaras* show a regular *kapota vyalavari griva* and *panjara* crest, capped by *vyala*, although such devices have been initiated schematically already in the time of Rajasimha Pallava (*C.* A.D. 700-728) at Valayankuttai and Pidari Rathas and in the early structural temples at Kanchipuram.

There is a concensus of opinion that the *devakoshta* image tradition has some clear ritual and functional validity for the age of the temple. It is almost a parameter owing to its having no direct connection with the sculptural style and character of the image. The tradition is so well kept up that even if a later image had replaced an earlier damaged figure in the *koshta* or niche, it would still be legitimate to take it as valid evidence for assigning the temple to the age of that tradition. Now, attempting a concrete application of the *koshthadevata* principle, in the Pallava and Pandya, Muttarayar, Paluvettarayar and other home zones (see chart) we find that certain of these traditions have selectively been absorbed successively by the regions with political link or physical propinquity. For instance, it was customary in the earliest stage to have Indra on the east, Siva on the south, Vishnu on the north (Arjuna Ratha). Then, Siva's position in the south was veriegated into Vrishabhantika, Dakshinamurti, Tripurantaka, while Brahma's position in the north was also superseded by Bhikshatana, Vishnu's position on west was well-maintained upto pre-Aditya times in Chola country itself (Nangavaram, Tillaisthanam Tiruchendurai, Tirukkattalai, Niyamam) apart from the western peripheral Pallava areas contemporary with Aditya (as for instance, Tiruttani, Takkolam, etc.). But new wave in the Chola style under terminal Aditya stage puts Ardhanari on the west in place of Vishnu (Nagesvara of Kumbhakonam, Tiruvaiyaru, Tiruvedikkudi, Tirukkattupalli and Tirupperaitturai) and the still later ones from Parantaka's time, fixes Lingodbhava there, to be followed axiomatically thereafter for several centuries. Generally, Tondaimandalam, upper Kaveri tract and Muttarayar area of Puddukkottai all opt for Vishnu or Ardhanari on the west. The germ for Lingodbhava of Parantaka's time is, however, already seen in Tirumayam Siva cave where the west facing Lingodhbhava relief occupies the same orientation as at the later Kandiyur structural temple.

For the eastern *koshtha* wherever, the temple faces west, one might again, recall the position of Indra generally in the eastern niche in Pallava region and also Karttikeya as at Kilianur and in the most authentic early Chola temple of Kilayur.

All these would indicate that, religion being indivisible, the earlier traditions were kept up in regions which are not in the metropolitan zone of the political powers and these latter invariably did not control local hieratic usages. Even the *ashtaparivara* temple-complex was already seen at Vijayalayacholisvaram and Kaliyapatti, in the earliest stage of structural temples, and this is a Pandya-Muttaryar bequeathal. Pallava zone did not have this usage. Jyestha, a part of the earlier *ashtaparivara* unit was also essentially a pan-Tamil Nadu tradition, particularly rooted in Pandyan cave-art, as a recurring feature. The Jyestha image which usually occupies a subshrine on the north-west part of the temple court is replaced by Durga in the modified *ashtaparivara* scheme from about the middle of the 10th century A.D. virtually after the reign of Parantaka; and the *ashtaparivara* scheme itself is ousted with the advent of a separate Devi shrine, sometime around the second half of the 11th century A.D.

The development of the Imperial Chola temple architecture is one of the most significant phases in the history of Tamil Nadu, mainly because the political authority that could back up the religious and artistic activities had been structured to last, and while Aditya's years were of great tactical importance, in having eliminated political opponents as well as erstwhile allies, with much deliberation, to build the empire, the art-legacy that was already in the soil could not be officially, at that stage, re-written. This transformation, to a great extent, takes place during Parantaka's time and in the period after him and before Raja Raja, the most significant trends of this stage being the introduction of *utsavabheras* in bronze for daily and festive ritual attention that had, by then, been systematised.

Thus, there is every reason to uphold a triple phasing of the *denoument* of the early Chola art articulations, before Raja Raja I (A.D. 985-1014) in to what was an efflorescence, out of an amalgam (*C.* AD. 871-907), through the finite crystallisation in

Late Parantaka stage and after (AD. 907-980). It was only during Raja Raja's time (A.D. 985-1014) that the effort climaxed into the architecturally individualistic Chola model, well and truly established. This model has from that time onwards, a sideward entry by a balustreated flight of steps to the transept corridor beyond the *ardhamandapa* implying that the *mahamandapa, nrittamandapa* and the *mukhamandapa* were separated from the holy of holies deliberately and a circumambulation was indicated from within by (*sandhara*) covered circuit, or from outside around the main *Vimana* clockwise, bringing the devotee back through the northern flight of steps, past the Chandesa shrine, into the transept, and taking him through the further axial structure of halls into the *mukhamandapa* where again two lateral entry and exit were provided.

It had a minimum nexus of *parivara* shrines expecially for Ganesa, Subrahmanya, Durga, Chandesa apart from a Nataraja, subshrine, a cloistered (*Tirumaligaichurru*) wall, a *gopuram* of some elevational prominence, a sculptural fixation for Dakshinamurti, Lingodbhava, Brahma, Ganesa, Durga, the elimination of redundant and atypical divinities like the Saptamatrikas and Jyestha, the introduction of Surya on the south-west cloister, facing into the main shrine, and the accession of a set of stipulated bronzes for daily and festival worship, such as Tripurantaka, Kirata, Chandesa, Ardhanari, Vrishabhantika, Umamahesvara (called Tyagaraja) besides the Somakanda which is a legacy though in stone from the Pallava times, Bhikshatana, etc. It had the development of a hundred pillared and in due course, another thousand pillared hall and in the later Pandya and Vijayanagara times, provision for a temple tank in the second *avarana* generally in the north east part of the premises.

There is sufficient evidence from inscriptions that already in the early 11th century A.D. if not earlier still, there was the institution of a *matha* attached to the temple, both in Vaishnava and Saivite cases, which generally directed the religious affairs of the temple, through *devakanmis* (Trustees), but the other temporal arrangements for the conduct of the daily as well as special functions in the temple were the common responsibilities of the *sabha* of the village in coordination with the trade guilds (*nagaram*) and the administrative political headman of the village.

The interior of the temples that might fall in the initial phase of early Chola period would also deserve to be carefully studied both for mutations and for stylistic differences. Here again, one can notice the play of regional styles, irrespective of the chronological justification for dynastic application. Taking Vijayalayacholisvaram, Kilayur, Tiruverumbur, Srinivasanallur, Lalgudi, Kannanur and Tiruchchennampundi and Bahur temples, we find that regionally, they are all outside the deltaic Kaveri area covered by Thanjavur District, and are variously on the Kollidam bank, or eastern Tiruchchi upland, upper Kaveri basin, or Pudukkottai upland. The internal disposition of the pillars divide them into the following groups Vijayalayacholisvarm and Tiruverumbur have no pillar on *ardhamandapa* and six pillars on *mahamandapa*; Kilayur Cholisvaram and all subshrines of Vijayalayacholisvaram are without any pillars in the elongated *ardhamandapa*, Kannanur and Bahur and Tiruchenanmepundi have two pillars in the central zone of separation between *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa*; Kilaiyur Agastisvaram has four rectangularly spaced pillars while Lalgudi has elongated *ardhamandapa* with four squarely spaced pillars. Lalgudi has its joinery between *Ardhamandapa* and *Mahamandapa* only externally emphasised but internally is a continuation, and Srinivasanallur has clear recessed joinery between *garbha* and *ardhamandapa* which is both internally and externally well emphasised. All the same, the last temple, is considered as later to Lalgudi on the basis of other elements. But the very evidence of the joinery in both the cases are comparable on the regional basis, that of Srinivasanallur being in a Ganga region and following the devices already prevalent in the later 9th or early 10th century A.D., while in the same period, Lalgudi expressed its joinery between *garbha* and *ardhamandapa* in a more integrated manner without creating a break. They are, thus, not factors of dynastic analogy but regional mannerisms for comparable problems of construction. Similar is the comparability between Bahur, Kannanur and Tiruchennampundi, all the three of which should have come up in the end of the 9th century. They had identical interior features, and were brought under the influence of one and the same king Nripatunga at least in the case of the first and third while the second is a Pandyan-Muttarayar idiom.

It is also interesting, for instance, that the *vimana* and *ardha-mandapa* exterior layout are the same in plinth, and in first *tala*-details at Kilayur and Valikandapuram but the latter is taken by some scholars as of the very first few years of Parantaka's time while the former is of the fag end of Aditya's time. This is largely because the two temples are built under the patronage of the Paluvettarayars who were ruling the eastern Tiruchchi upland in which both Kilaiyur a Valikandapuram are located. Valikanda-puram really adds substantially to our knowledge of Kilayur.

Barrett, while making out a case for a residuary group of early Chola temples out of the decidedly swollen list of Balasubrahmanyam, depends a shade too subtly on art rather than architecutre and gives a schematic analyses of the architecture in his alphabetical groupings of plinth, first *tala*, tower, etc. While his first phase temples total to 34, his second phase to 10 and third phase to 38, as many as 22 of the his first phase are located outside Thanjavur District, the homeland of Aditya I in the early years of his power ; as many as 7 of his second are similarly so, and as many as 18 of his third. Of his plinth categories, type A I-B 2 are the continuation of pre-Chola modes, while of the remaining, only C I-C5 could be deemed as architecturally formative new trends, and B 1-B 6 are developed combinations of the *padabandha* and *kapotabandha* groups. Besides, for his illustrations, he symptomatically selected 75 percent sculptures-indicating his deep preferences. Erumbur temple or Gramam temple which is in the Tondaimandalam is called early Chola temple while they are indeed the continuance of the architectural form already prevalent in the Pallava period, with no special Chola addition to them. On the other hand, Tirunamanallur with its corner brackets of *nayikas* springing for the *phalaka* of pilasters and supporting the cornice is of a type similar to Valikandapuram and of Tirualanduraimahadeva temple at Kilappaluvur and Nagesvara at Kumbakonam and hence justifiably to be deemed as stylistically of the Parantaka period. Its sculp-ture, however, is by and large Pallava in massive shoulders, attenuated waist and modelling of the face and *kirita* even, but only a *padmabandha pitha* supplied to it is Chola. But some other niche-sculptures here are not having this type of *pitha* but the *manch-abandha* type which is more akin to the Pallava. Thus, in dealing

with architectural stages, we should steer clear of leaning too heavily on sculptural characteristics but rather deal with structural idioms and art motifs employed in the structural designing. This way, a *padmabandha* plinth, the brackets on the *phalaka*, the tympanum on the niches with a very weak filigree like floral and figural carving are more truly early Chola as these obtain in all the early temples, and indeed further, during the 10th century A.D., get slowly degenerated into mere blocked out parts with indifferent surface work.

The most rational manner of architectural treatment should easily be the regional trends for which purpose Tamil Nadu, divides itself most conveniently on a traditional pattern into Tondaimandalam, Cholamandalam, Pandimandalam and Kongumandalam with some stylistic integrity in each of these and with an architectural base for each stage which gets cross-fertilized in fruitful periods of political supercession of one area by the other or by the shrinking of the empires in times of crises. While, to all intents and purposes, Aditya period is one of building up of the empire, Parantaka's was one where consolidation was set off partly by demolition of the empire-which shrank both at Tondaimandalam and Ilam (Sri Lanka)—resulting in the reassertion of certain Tondaimandalam trends in the matrix of Chola architectural transactions, while yet clinging to some diagnostic art motifs and usages that developed in the Parantaka days. Which is why post-Parantaka period upto the time of Sembianmadevi is largely a stage of recession of Chola stylistic architectural supremacy which was to rise again during Raja Raja to Kulottunga stage. The Early Chola temples upto the time of Parantaka are all *dvitala* or at best *tritala*, especially in some Vaishnavite examples like, Mannarkoil in Tirunelveli District intended for three different shrines in the *talas*. The utilization of *mukhyavimanas* begins only from the time of Raja Raja and this period is enriched by the integration of the Eastern Chalukyan weft into the Chola warp. Then, for the first time, the imagination of the guilds soars up to create models which can be a variant of the *Pancharamas* the Eastern Chalukya kings had built in the days of Chalukya Bhima and his predecessor Gunaga Vijayaditya II at Chebrolu, Palakollu, Draksharama, Bhimarama and Amaravati. The archetype was the raising of the ground

tala into two *bhumis* and the superstructure over it. The Chola genius built on this idea in the two magnificant Brihadisvara shrines at Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram, with a massive tower of the *mukhyavimana* category of 13 and 8 storeys, and was able to carry the tempo even beyond the 11th century in the two more *mukhyavimanas* at Darasuram A.D. 1147 and Tribhuvanam A.D. 1250 although in terms of architecture it was more a horizontal development on the ground, in the form of subshrines and the ancillary structures rather than any lineal development of Raja Raja's and Rajendra's great temples. Several ritual developments and artistic recrudescence of the irrepressible Chola craftsmen in new innovations in layout and in surface ornamentation of pillars and ceilings are in evidence, however, in this later Chola period.

Structural temple phase in Kerala

In terms of structural temple architecture, the end of the early Kerala stage (when its liaison was virtually dominated by Pandyan art and culture, in the cave phase, in so far as southern and central Kerala were concerned, operating both directly and through the ghats and passes that link them with Tamil Nadu was clearly integrated by the Chola conquest not only of the Pandyan region but also almost the entire Kerala, from the time of Raja Raja I. Interesting developments accrue to the layout of the structural temples in architectural pattern as well as in art themes and sculpture. The temples ranging in age between *C.* A.D., 900 and 1200 that represent the situation best be the Bhagavati temple at Vilinjam, Vishnu temple at Tiruvikramangalam, Ramesvara temple at Quilon, Sri Krishna shrine inside Padmanabha temple at Trivandrum, Tirunarayanapuram near Attingal, Adityesvaram at Adityanallur all in south Kerala, Kilattali, Tirukkulasekharapuram both at Kodungallur, Madattilappan temple at Peruvanam, Vishnu temple at Pundarikapuram (Mudaikunnam), Kattilmadam near Palghat and Subrahmanya temple at Kodumba, all in central Kerala. The northern Kerala temples are almost exculsively influnced by Karnataka coastal architecture in plan and elevation scheme and by the Karnataka sculptural legacy in its cult themes. Excepting for the northern Kerala examples, the rest of the state had been employing a common idiom in architecture

initiated about the 12th-13th century A.D. when the state underwent a political revival arising out of which a typical indigenization of its art idioms was consciously adopted and in such a way that it did not do violence either to its earlier architectural traditions or to the essential character and symbolism of the cult traditions of Kerala itself, which was different from that of Tamil Nadu by being directly obligated to the Vedic ideals of god head, even in a developed pantheistic mould of the subsequent times. The new urge that developed after the 13th century A.D. was indeed created by the Chola conquests and stimulated by the changes that were taking place under the Imperial Cholas in Tamil Nadu itself, in layout, elevation and cult manifestations. In the sequel, the type that was most acceptable without vitally interfering with the pure Tamil-Karnataka norms of architecture and, at the same time, in tune with the secular and utilitarian trends of Kerala residential architectural propensities, and was calculated towards a fast propagation and expansion of the temple building usage (in the renascent religious fillip given by the exalted religious patronage of the Cholas) was the consummation of the typical brick, timber and stone mixed medium which was giving scope to architecture, sculpture and painting. In fact, temple architecture comes into its own with this trend and was virtually a recrudescence of its grass-root stages when wood architecture was the most prevalent, irrespective of whether plans and elevations varied according to the basic shapes of temples namely square, rectangular, circular, octagonal or apsidal shapes, where the art of figure-sculpture was specialised in the bracket forms and diminutive but highly distinctive and extensive sequential or serialized cameos of puranic and epic themes on the very walls of the temple or in the subsidiary parts like the *namaskaramandapam, vadilmadam* or *mukha-mandapam*. The new movement also resulted in due course in *Silpa* texts like *Silparatna* of Srikumara and *Tantrasamuchchaya* of Narayana introducing the taxonymic parallels to the mainland Tamil Nadu types and at the sametime, presenting fresh innovations which were consistent with the symbolism of the vedic oriented religious credo of the priestly classes in Kerala. The *panchaprakara* scheme of the womb temple which was a microcosm with its own *pithika, vithika, antaramandala, antahara* and the *bahyahara* (or *ubhayapankti* where it was a *sandhara* temple) corresponding to the *naligriha, nalambalam, vilakkumadam* and the *sivelipura* and *puramadil*

or *prakara* circuit) which was the macrocosm, reflects the symbolism best and well suited the development of the woodcraft and inspired mural traditions which were burgeoning out, in an idiom which was more or less of the same *lime-medium* technique followed by Cholas of the mainland, where it was preceded by several experimentations in the Pandya and Pallava region as at Sittannavasal, Kanchipuram, Mamandur, Panamalai, etc. A corresponding earlier mural tradition also existed in Kerala, as at the famous Tirunandikara cave-temple in present day Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu, patronised by Vikramaditya Varaguna, the distinguished Ay King of the region in the 9th century.

In terms of the temple rituals, which are reduced to the minimum in Kerala, notwithstanding an animistic and taboo-controlled ethos of the cult potential of Kerala, both under Vaishnavism and Saivism, the *vaikhanasa* mode of the former and the non-*Agamic* basis of the latter appeals to the Kerala spiritual mind and its main divinities like Anantasayi, Sankaranarayana, Harihara and Sastha (the culmination of the *Sankaranarayanatattva* as blended with *Sakti* or the Bhagavati) were integrated or cross-sublimated in the sacred precincts of the temple and aniconism and iconism were practised side by side. Subrahmanya, Gauri, Saptamatrikas, etc., were all found alongside Sankaranarayana and Bhagavati temples. Often Subrahmanya was represented by the worship of snakes (similar to the trends seen in coastal Karnataka and Andhradesa) and Saptamatrikas, by mere *bali-pithas*, in miniature, usually kept on the appropriate southern open courtyard around the main *Srikoil*. In fact the very adoption of the term *Srikoil* universally in Kerala terminology to represent the main inner temple is itself a continuance of the Pandya-Chola tradition of Tamil Nadu where it was customary to designate the main temple by this term.

The temple so arising, from the 12th-13th centuries A.D. has the *naligriha* complete from plinth to its own *sikhara* top which could indeed be square, octagonal or circular, *antarmandala, antahara, madhyahara*. *alphagrihas* or *single storeyed* temples might have the two walls of the sanctum unified into one coalescing wall. There is a *dvara* placed in the *agra-koshtha*, according to the texts, and while the front one is the main one, the other three, in the cardinal

directions are *ghanadvaras* (or false ones). While in a good number of cases, this is indeed so, we have considerable percentage of temples where the three other doors are also real doors with openings leading into the *madhyahara*. In all these cases it is apparent that the text is itself somewhat later than usage of these features in the temples. These *ghanadvaras* have *torana* motif over them invariably. The *namaskaramandapa* is a cubit of *silpa* measure distant from the balustrated approach steps into the *Srikoil*. Since the text also specifies that the *balipitha* should be in own chamber (*svadhamani*), this is another evidence by which one could separate the earlier temples which have the *balipitha* and *dhvajastambha* out in the open, from those which follow the textual stipulations. The superstructural arrangement is also most specifically described in the text. The *garbha kudya* is provided over the pillars around the *naligriha* and by *kadalikakarana*. The scheme integrates with the outer skeletal framework in the *pidhana phalaka* followed by the *uttara pattika*, *karnasutras* (diagonal rafters) and the *avalambana* (projecting eaves). Best planks and metal sheets or tiles cover the rafter scheme outside. A device for the separation of tho *tala bhitti* from the *griva* exists in double storeyed temples, which distinction does not obtain in the single storeyed ones. The decorative device of the *tala bhitti* in the former case with the relief models of *kutas* and *salas* and *gavakshas* is a hang-over of the *hara* of the Tamil Nadu entablature scheme. Temples over three storeys are not mentioned as feasible models and where a third *tala* rise is desired, a *madhyama sikhara* is erected over the scheme. Another interesting element is in respect of *upapitha* or the under-plinth below the *adhisthana* which becomes of lesser elevation if the temple becomes of greater size or in other words is inversely proportional to the general size of the temple. There is a fairly extensive use of the *sukanasa* in temples, except in those which are either single storeyed or are circular in plan. This *sukanasa* is, therefore, an influence of Karnataka as it does not obtain at all in Tamil Nadu.

The *adhisthana* combinations are seemingly of six main categories namely with *upana*, *jagati*, *tripattakumuda*, *kantha*, *pattika*, *vedi* and *prati* (type site Irinjalakuda, Bharata temple); *pada bandha* type with *vrittakumuda*, schematic rafter course or *varimana* in *kantha*, *pattika*, *vedi* and *prati* (type site Tirumittakkodu, Vishnu temple); with *upapitha* terrace sometimes showing *tripatta kumuda*, *kantha* and *kapota* (as

seen at Tirunavaya); *vrittakkumuda*, *kantha* and *kapota*, *vedi* and *prati* (as at Chattanur); sometimes with *upapitha*, with high *padma* and *prati* (as seen at Tiruvalla Vishnu temple); *pratibandha* type of plinth with *vedi* (as seen at Vazhapalli); with *upapitha* sanctums into *padma kantha* and *kapota* (as at Tonnal); and *tripatta kumuda kantha*, *kapota* and another *kantha* (without *varimana*) and *vedi* (as at Paralasseri Subramanya temple) and corresponding essentially to the evolved *kapotabandha* type of plinth of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The plinth of *namaskara mandapa* is invariably of the *pratibandha* type. The *pranala* is of a very ornate tubular character with the terminal in a few cases supported by dwarf sculptured in the round separately and placed below them. All these features have a uniform diffusion and types vary only spatially but all these textual types have no chronological evolutionary stages. The *vedi* of the Kerala temple like that of Tamil Nadu is not available in the oldest temples before 10th century A.D. and is a circumventing railing part otherwise with its own entrance. The Kerala temple is thus a centrifocal entity, more like the *saptaprakara* scheme of Tamil Nadu temples, which are modelled after the *Vaikhanass* practice of fixing subsidiary shrines in different *prakaras*, rather than the linear expansion of normal temple scheme in Tamil Nadu, forming a continuous traverse from the *dvajastambha* to the *Srikoil*, whereas that of Kerala is concentric in character by which the main orientation only pierces the cardinal point of the layout. An important adjunct of Kerala temple is, apart from the *namaskara mandapa*, the *Kuttambalam* which is outside the inner enclosure and is placed in the south-east part of the premises and conducts performances either of the traditional gesture-drama of unspoken type, called the *Chakkiyarkuttu* or of *kathakali*, and has a side entrance, a backstage and a hall. The medieval texts of Kerala call the circular temples of the *Padmaprasada* scheme, but circular temples also do not have a spatial fixation but are found throughout Kerala from north to south. The *mulabhera* in the sanctum have many variations, like Vishnu, Krishna, Rama, Parasurama, Anantasayi, etc., and bcth iconic and aniconic forms of Siva are prevalent in the sanctum. While there are no regular *utsavabheras* in most of the temples, although in early medieval times, a good number bronzes of medium to large sizes were found in southern part of Kerala, in a prevalent Pandyan stylistic idiom and seemingly an amalgam of Chola-Pandya sculptural blend, *Bhogasakti* concept is sometimes present and this figure

is often taken in procession within the innermost enclosure of the temple. A *Vishnu vyuha* layout promintly appears, as typically seen at Tirukkulasekharapuram and elsewhere. The temple offerings to devotees are also a blend of Saiva, Vaishnava and other trends, with sandal paste, flowers, *tulasi* and *bilva leaves*, consistent with its vedic mode of ritual.

C. Chola efflorescence

The efflorescence of Cholamandala imperial style from the time Raja Raja was visually more arresting than any other stage gone by. The master-connoisseur in Raja Raja and his virtually limitless scope for powerful religious patronage should have permitted an effective boost to architectural styling and mannerisms. It brought forth a sense of expansiveness to the temple campus, which till then had been formulated in a rather compact and well-confined area. The shrine chamber, *ardhamandapa* and the *mahamandapa* together were then hardly exceeding a two-hundred feet perimeter along the compound wall and quite often the cella was a tiny room of not more than six feet square. The later Chola style initiated by Raja Raja marked a striking contrast to this outlook. It was becoming obvious that the temple, in the fulfilment of a dominant temporal and administrative role imposed on it by the prosperous kingdom, quite apart from the new thrust imparted by the religious canons in the daily and annual calendar, was to provide a grosser physical space for the several functions and events. This increase in its size certainly called for a new designing of the plan and elevation of the temple, besides the consolidation of the foundations of the structure. The sequel to this was the increasing use of a sizeable *upapitha* (or surbase below the *adhisthana*) the provision of a double set of lateral entry and exit at the *ardhamandapa* and *mukhamandapa* stages, to ensure a smooth flow of the devotee crowd, and the corresponding elaborations in the *mahamandapa* and *nrittamandapa* (latter appearing for the first time) providing for subsidiary divinities in the form of *utsavabheras* in bronze; and lastly, the necessary modifications in the elevational profile of the temple. While the reign of Raja Raja continued the already existing models also in the respective areas outside Cholamandalam, forming variants of the Chola style, it was in Cholamandalam that the temple design was allowed to transform

itself into a spectacular model. The *mukhyavimana* stone tradition is one of the significant parts of this development and forms the very crux of later Chola architectural enterprise, notwithstanding medium sized temples also prevailing side by side. A brief assesment of the *mukhyavimanas* would, thus, be relevant at this stage.

The *Silpa* texts call any southern temple which is more than four storeys high as a *mukhyavimana* and expect the ultimate limit of expansion of the elevation not to be greater than twelve storeys. Before the Cholas, either under the Pallava or the Pandyas (or for that matter, even under the resourceful Vatapi Chalukyas) the temple was never raised higher than four *talas*, the only notable example being the Virattana temple at Tiruvadigai (South Arcot District) where the temple is seen rising to five storeys. There is no doubt about the Pallava foundation of this temple, seemingly of the time of Paramesvaravarman, in the thirties of the 8th century A.D., though parts of the superstructure had been renovated later. The designing was almost closely an imitation of Kailasanatha of Kanchi, with only the variations that, in the sanctum, there was an *Umamahesvara* and not a *Somaskanda* panel on the back wall; and the subshrines, let into the thickness of the walls, as at Kailasanatha, were facing respectively the four cardinal directions on the four sides, whereas, at the latter place, they were facing either east or west.

In the Cholamandalam, on the other hand, we have from the time of Raja Raja initiated his grandest ever temple-the Brihadisvara at Thanjavur-three or four other *mukhyavimanas*, such as the companion Brihadisvara of his son at Gangaikondacholapuram, the Airavatesvara at Darasuram near Kumbakonam by Raja Raja II; probably, the Sayavanesvara temple at Saykkadu near Kaveripattanam, of the 12th century A.D.; and, finally, the Kampaharesvara temple at Tribhuvanam, (mid-13th century A.D.) by Kulottunga III. All these temples were entirely built of stone and conform to two basic models, those of Raja Raja and Rajendra forming one type and the remaining three of another *milieu*. In almost all the cases, a unified planning is manifest showing the main temple complex, its important subshrines, the *prakara* walls and the *gopuram*, all of the same period and authorship. In the case of the first two

mentioned, there is a strong *prima facie* basis to concede that Mahesvara Saivism had been the driving canonical force behind their design as well as organisation, although it is patent in the first and under-played in the other. This arises out of the fact that these two temples are *Sandhara* (or with an inner covered ambulatory, raised in two *bhumis* on the ground floor walling, separated by a dominant cornice moulding. The temple of Raja Raja introduces the large, cardinal *ghana dvaras* (or false doors) on the wall sections, in both the *bhumi* divisions, in which the ground floor, having the sanctum, shows also four major niches fixed on the inner walls of this ambulatory on their outer face, oriented to the *ghana dvaras* and containing life size sculptures of Aghora, Sadyojata and Vamadeva manifestations, in the form of seated Virabhadra, dancing Pradoshamurti and seated combination of Amba and Sarasvati, the fourth Tatpurusha manifestation being the very *linga* in the cella, facing east. This Mahesa concept was a Mahesvara trend and in the Thanjavur temple this was further emphasised by the appointment of functionaries in the religious services of the temple such as the forty reciters of *Tirumurai* in the temple, carrying the names or appellations of Aghora, Vamadeva, Tatpurusha, Isana, Sadasiva, etc., as seen from Raja Raja's records here. In Gangaikondacholapuram, however, neither the falsedoor, nor the niche carvings exist but the elevational and plan design is more or less similar to the Thanjavur model. In the use of the ambulatories of the two *bhumis* of the ground floor, again, Raja Raja showed the greatest imagination, presenting his unrivalled mural paintings in the lower ambulatory on the main walls, and the *karana* dance pose series (of Bharata muni's *Natyasastra*) in the upper ambulatory. But Rajendra's temple was satisfied without these subsidiary religio-aesthetic elaborations and was seemingly incomplete to a degree. The rising *talas* reached to a maximum of 13 in Raja Raja's *magnum opus* (or the prescribed maximum of 12, only if one *upagriva* floor on the top is kept out of count). It soared high in a stark pyramidal rise, while Rajendra's temple which rose only eight *talas* high, had a voluptuous curve along its diagonal rise, caused by the broadening of the first two superstructural *talas* and slight narrowing of the rest and merging them at the top. Raja Raja's sported an octagonal neck and *sikhara*, while Rajendra's was of circular neck and *sikhara*. Otherwise, both of them in the patterning of the *bhumis* of the ground floor, the interior layout and

sanctum, the massive *linga*; and in the lateral entries at *ardhamandapa* and *mukhamandapa* stages, are all alike. It would seem that originally the Thanjavur temple would have been a *parivara* shrine complex, with subshrines for Saptamatrikas, Ganesa, Subramanya, Chandesa and nandi, built at the respective points, of which hardly the the Chandesa alone has survived in the original, while the others had either disappeared or supreceded by their later counterparts. The temple had a *dikpala* scheme of shrines introduced along the cloister circuit (the cloister itself notionally raised in two stages, on the outer wall face, in conformity to the two *bhumi* rise of the temple ground *tala*) for Agni on the south east corner near the temple kitchen; Yama on southern cloister at the centre; for Nirruti on south west corner; Kubera on the western central part, Varuna on the north west corner and Isana on the north east corner and Indra integrated with Gopura. In some cases, like Kubera, Varuna and Isana, each of these subshrines is complete with plinth and wall. The two *gopuras* of the temple are both the creations of Raja Raja. The shrines for consort (Brihannayaki) appears to have been added in the time of the second Pandyan empire, in the 13th century A.D., while the Nataraja shrine was also closely following it, although the Nataraja bronze itself was commissioned by Raja Raja and might have, for sure, originally been in the *nrittamandapa* of the main temple. The original Nandi, coeval with the temple is also no more there, the present massive nandi obviously being a late Vijayanagara addition, along with its *mandapa*.

Rajendra's temple has an even more spacious *nrittamandapa* than Raja Raja's, and houses today several bronzes, including an inimitable example of Subrhamanya, and has most of its *parivara* shrines in utter ruins, with only Chandesa shrine which was coeval, still intact, while three or four more, including the Akilandesvari (consort) shrine separately on the northern side oriented east and the Durga shrine facing the small *simhakeni* well, further on the north eastern part, the latter with an arresting twenty-armed Durga in the northern Indian iconographic form, were perhaps slightly later to the temple. In fact, there are several novel features introduced here by Rajendra, after his northern expedition (attested to by the Gahadavala record in the temple) such as the *navagraha* slab with Surya prominently on the face and rising in two tiers with lotus motif on top; the introduction of

double storeyed plain northern type *dvaramandapa* on the north intercepting the northern cloister wall; and several subshrines which should have studded on the cloister, probably in 16 a *parivara* scheme, of which that of Surya on the north east part of the cloister recently gave in their debris, nine out of the original twelve, identical standing Aditya figures of great charm in stone; and the massive pair of *dvarapalas* on the main eastern *gopura* entrance. The *gopura* itself is sadly ruined due to this temple having been despoiled systematically by the British engineers while re-building the Grand anicut near Tiruchchirapalli.

The two other major *mukhyavimanas* at Darasuram and Tribhuvanam, are of a different ilk, and are otherwise complete units, expansively laid out and elaborate in the subshrines. They are without any inner covered ambulatory scheme, and without any double *bhumi* scheme for the ground floor, their *upapithas* are less massive than in the earlier two instances and their *sikharas* are octagonal and circular respectively. The frontal face of the tower and the subshrine for Umamahesvara built on it appears to continue the common feature seen already in Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram. There are only four subshrines integrated with the cloister, on the four corners, with provision for simple exit intercepting in the centre of the southern and northern cloister at ground level, in addition to the *gopurams* of which an inner and outer one have been built particularly at Darasuram. Of the cloister-shrines the one at the north-east at Darasuram is for the Nataraja *sabha*. There is a separate shrine for Tyagaraja along the southern part of the *mahamandapa* with common wall in both cases, and the Chandesa shrine is original. Consort shrines are separately built facing east, by the side of the main shrine, in an entirely independant *prakara*-scheme, in the case of Darasuram. It is in the *mukhamandapa* design that a special innovation is introduced, perhaps for the first time, during the erection of Darasuram. This converts the *mukhamandapa* or *nrittamandapa* (which has covered walls along the entire stretch on the north and parts of the angles of the east), into a chariot shape, with a projecting porch on the south, with access only from the southern court through an eastern-western double balustraded flights of steps, ending on the porch landing and this porch itself being designed as drawn by chariot with horses and elephants. The chariot wheels, spokes, tyre, hub,

etc. are compiete in all minute details of cut-stone craftsmanship. The mandapa at Darasuram is named 'Rajagambhiran mandapam'. The spokes of the wheels of the chariots often carry the figure of Surya or fish in all of them, in certain examples elsewhere. This new innovation is seen, besides Darasuram and Tribhuvanam, at Tiruvarur, Tiruvaiyaru, Kumbakonam (in several examples both Vaishnava and Saiva) Kunnandarkoil (Pudukkottai district)—all in Cholamandalam - Sendamangalam (South Arcot district) the capital of the Kadava king Kopperunchingadeva (mid—13th century), Chidambaram (two examples, one opposit to Natarajasabha, on the entrance gates, and another in the Pandyanayagam temple), Tiruvakkarai, Vriddhachalam and Melakkadambur, all the Tondaimandalam, to mention only a few. There can be no doubt that there are dozens of other places of this example in Cholamandalam, and this creative outburst should have fired the imagination of Narasimha II of the Eastern Ganga line, for erecting, entirely for Surya, a chariot-temple at Konarak—by far the most stupendous example of its kind in India, though in a soft stone, and with a sculptural prolixity so characteristic of medieval Kalinga art. It is interesting to note here that in the Cholamandalam itself, during the reign of Kulottinga I (A.D. 1070-1120) already, an *anuloma* caste of *rathakaras* or regular chariot-making carpenter - craftsmen were established in different parts of the realm, to offer their expertise not only for the designing of the wooden temple cars, but also the *gopura* work, thus fixing the profession to be followed by these *rathakaras*, as decided during Kulottunga's reign, in conformity with *Sastras* and juristic laws like *Mitakshara* of Vignanesvara. It is not surprising that this special craft expertise had expanded all over Tamil Nadu and Kerala where till recently, there was not a single major village which would not have boasted of a temple car and an annual car festival in which the entire village participated, thus cementing social equality before god and rural cooperation. The car festival at the Jagannath temple of Puri in Orrissa is seemingly an upshot of this unprecedented expansion of the temple car craftmanship, during the Chola period, when the empire extended upto Kalinga and matrimonial ties were forged between the Cholas and Narasimha II. The Chariot *mukhamandapa* of the early *mukhya vimanas* of Darasuram and Tribhuvanam had certainly been the harbingers of this wholesome socio-cultural tradition.

D. Temple mural traditions

The introduction of wall paintings or murals at or around religious abodes either of monks or of temples for Gods had been an interesting part of Indian religious art. There were certainly *chitrasalas*, *chitravithis*, in urban centres in the classical period, often for secular enjoyment or romantic environment or as a deliberate technical and aesthetic acquisition for being counted as a *rasika* (connoisseur) or *nagaraka* (cockney). More anciently, in the prehistoric times, the hunting and foraging groups were given to vivid presentations of their own outlook and perspective of the animal world around them and their day-to-day avocations, on the rocky walls of their natural caverns. However, for religious purposes, alike for *sadhana* (concentration and meditation) as for inspiration and edification of the lay devotees or disciples, it was customary to embellish the walls of the monastic structures and worship-centres under Buddhist, Hindu and Jain aegis in various periods, ranging from the last few centuries of the pre-Christian era to the late medieval times.

Outstanding centres of these are found both in Tamil Nadu and Kerala besides other regions. They are Ajanta, Bagh, Ellora, Badami and Lepakshi outside, and Sittannavasal, Kanchipuram, Thanjavur, Tirumalai and Tirunandikara, Cochin, Trichur, and Tiruvanchikkalam, etc., inside Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Invariably, the raw materials for the paint were drawn from the mineral colours available from the rocks around, such as red and yellow ochre, *terra verte*, carbon, gypsum, lapiz lazuli and lime. From the point of view of their techniques, involving either preparation of the *carrier* which supports the *ground*, the *ground* on which the paintings are executed, the *pigment* used in the design and the binding medium (for which gum, glue, casein or drying oil have been used), the style or school is broadly classifiable, essentially on experimental researches on the European murals, as from Italy, and also researches on the Indian murals by the chemical experts of the archaeological Survey of India and State Governments into four groups that have been noted : I. Ajanta and Bagh, (Ist Century B.C.—6th century A.D.) ; II. Sittannavasal, Kanchipuram, Thanjavur, Narttamalai, Lepakshi, Sompalle, Tirumalai, Cochin, etc., (8th century A.D.—18th century A.D.) ; III. Ellora (*C.* 8th century A.D.) ; and IV. Badami (*C.* 6th-7th century A.D.).

Group II pertains to Tamil Nadu and Kerala. It is found that a good binding medium exists in adjacent layers of rough plaster, fine plaster and filling, as at Lepakshi, Sompalli and all south Kerala types, while in Vijayanagara and Nayaka examples, painting in *lime medium* on plaster were employed. The latter consisted mixing the pigments with lime water and applying them to the dry plaster on the wall. This method stands in contrast to the Chola mural art at Thanjavur where the pigments are said to have been mixed with water and applied over a wet plaster in the true *fresco* style. At Kanchipuram (Kailasanatha), some of the paintings have no plaster but have instead lime wash alone for the ground.

In Ajanta paintings, the pigments have been applied on a plaster which is firm and has been applied in *tempera* technique, with animal glue as the binding medium. At Ellora, it is somewhat modified from Ajanta by a transitional technique with ground of one mud layer with one to three lime plasters on it. There is no adequate binding medium between them. The paint film is fairly thick suggesting lack of technical delicacy in the artists' brush work (though not a reflection on the aesthetic sensibilities of the artists). This trait is shared by the Nayaka paintings at Lepakshi, Sompalle and Kerala examples. The lime plaster of Ellora, besides, is of poor quality. Ellora technique appears to be a compromise between the *tempera* and *fresco* schools.

The paintings of Kailasanatha and Vaikunthaperumal at Kanchipuram are some of the best examples of Hindu mural art of Tamil Nadu. They are older than the Chola paintings of Thanjavur or Narttamalai (Vijayalayacholisvaram). They are to some extent similar to the Badami technique although the latter is *tempera* technique, with animal glue used. Kanchipuram examples have pigments applied in lime.

At Sittannavasal, the technique adopted is more that of *fresco-secco* school, in lime medium on plaster. The stucco comprises a rough coat of lime plaster with a fine lime wash thereon. The painted surface resisted action of water and of organic solvents, as shown by experiments.

At Thanjavur, we have a unique case of Chola murals in the true *fresco* style, superimposed in the fullness of time by Nayaka murals (dated to A.D. 1646-47) in the portrait painting of Raghunatha Nayaka (A.D. 1633-73) in *fresco-secco* style. The particles of pigments were found interfused in the interstices of the Chola plaster, unlike the Nayak ones, which were free from them. This important difference between the pure-*fresco* and the *fresco-secco* methods is worth noting. However, in the Chola paintings, here, we are able to find two categories of work, the scenes relating to Saint Sundaramurti's journey to Kailasa on elephant, in technique as well as art style, being inferior to the earliest Chola group of murals, depicting *apsarases*, Raja Raja and Karuvur Devar and Tripurantaka panels on the southern and northern side inner walls of the ambulatory. The degenerate Chola style was perhaps of the time of Kulottunga II whose minister was Sekkilar (who compiled *Periapuranam* which alone is giving the Sundaramurti episode referred to above).

We have also some evolutionary stages in Kerala wall paintings, the oldest of which is preserved, though in fragments, at Tirunandikara cave-temple. This is a lime-medium method mixing lime with the pigment for binding. It is nearer to Sittannavasal and Tirumalapuram cave-temple murals (both of the Pandyan period) and might have been influenced by them. The other Kerala temple murals, executed generally on the ground of laterite, have varied thickness of rough plaster. At Chemmantitta, the white-wash applied over the rough plaster is thinner than in other place like Peruvanam where the paint film, besides, is relatively thicker, showing the lack of delicacy in the artists handling of the brush. Other notable examples are at Triprayar, Trichur, Pallimanna, etc. At Mattanchery Palace itself (formerly of the Royal House of Cochin) which has one of three major palace murals of Kerala virtually as royal *ateliers* (the others being at Padmanabhapuram and Krishnapuram, both in south Kerala), we have in the lower chamber, a pure rich lime used and finished in a single coat of lime, with a low percentage of impurities, a gloss for the lime-wash, a firm adherance of the plaster, all showing special attention paid to the preparation of lime. The plaster besides was not affected by soaking of water and later by boiling. The technique

employed was thus clearly of the *lime medium* type of the *fresco*-school. No dyeing oil, glue, casein or others were seen used with the fragments as binding medium. The pigments had not interfused into the plaster and are without brush marks, normally visible in *fresco-buono* or true *fresco* process. The Kerala murals were, thus, in a *lime medium*, a variant form of *fresco*. Traditional description in texts like *Silparatna*, however, refer to a complicated indigenous process, for preparing the ground, etc., which have not been scientifically supported by the experiments on the murals.

In the murals of Tamil Nadu, thus, we have the Pallava traditions, as at Kanchipuram (and probably at Mamandur also); the Pandya tradition as at Sittannavasal, Tirumalapuram and even, by influence, in the Venad, under the Ays, in lower Travancore, as at Tirunandikara; and a resplendant Chola tradition, as spectucularly introduced in the lower ambulatory around the sanctum of the Great temple at Thanjavur and the medieval traditions in the Vijayanagara-Nayaka period as at Tirupparuttikunram or Jina Kanchi, Tirumalai, Adiyamankottai (in the Chennraya temple there displaying scenes from Ramayana, Mahabharata and a *Visvarupa* Vishnu panel of great size, all on the ceiling and some labelled); while in the temples of Kerala, we have their own characteristic stylistic individuality and thematic richness and wide currency. Of these, Sittannavasal, Tirupparuttikunram and Tirumalai were for the Jain faith and reflect a major contribution of Jainism to the art-pool of Tamil Nadu. The *apsarases*, royal head and the *samavasarana* scene of a pool, with *bhavyas* thronging the scene, along with flower plants and animals, as at Sittannavasal in the cave-temple, dated for its renovations to the time of Avanipasekhara Srimara Srivallabha (mid 9th century A.D.), with the cave itself perhaps a century earlier, are the most aesthetically *classical*, in brush work, expression and colour scheme. The Vardhamana temple complex at Tirupparuttikunram, it should be noted, has the ceilings of the *Sangitamandapam* decorated with complete scenes from the *Sripurana* of the Jains relating to the life of Adi or Rishabhanatha, the first *Tirthankara*. They, along with the *mandapa*, were commissioned by Iruguppa, the general of Harihara II in the last quarter of the 14th century A.D. . The same Irugappa patronised the construction of the Kunthunatha Jinalaya (Ganigitti Jinalaya temple) at Hampi—the oldest extant stone temple of Vijayanagara.

E. Temple Bronzes

Like many other congenial zones of India, Tamil Nadu had its involvement in the fine arts. We have already shown how in its religious art, it was able to display its genius for sculpture in relief and in the round, wall paintings and bronze images. This body of arts, has two dimensions, namely the formal and aesthetic. The former is a part of the wider common legacy of the lower part of the peninsula under various dynasties, notably the Satavahana empire which was the cultural watershed for the urbanization that blossomed in the peninsula from the Narmada to Kaveri in the early historical times and became the progenitor-matrix of the present south Indian heritage. If the Satavahana empire had not brought within its overall influence a larger part of the peninsula and had not imbued it with a seafaring maritime bias, and if the commercial maritime *elite* had not fostered ritual brahmanism as well as found a new glamour and interest in the vanguard movements of new rebel religion which were centrifugal from the mainstream of Vedic and Brahmanical Hinduism, the story of the peninsula would have continued in its quondam pastoral tribal matrix.

The earliest art-expression, as on date, on bronze that could be recorded on the Tamil soil, is displayed on the diminutive bronze image of Aditi or Mother Goddess prototype found in the urn-burial of Adichanallur in the Pandyan country. The inspiration is obviously from the terracotta figurines and other *"repousse"* impression specimens from the Ganga valley in the Mauryan period attesting to possible close contact between the local people of Tamil Nadu with the northerners at that time. Despite the fact that it could not be dated securely nor its actual socio-cultural context averred with any objectivity, it should still serve as a persuasive index for the metal craft for specific iconic purposes, albeit at folk level. Its art-development might perhaps have to be linked with those elements of Tamil sculptural, religious art as are indigenous (such as Jyeshtha), which had been left by the road side in the canonical developments in the pre-medieval times.

There are a few others like the bronzes of Buddhapadu from Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh which attest to the antecedent

metal casting tradition in the medium sized religious specimens for Buddhism. These are generally taken as datable to the 6th century A.D. They might have provided the necessary enthusiasm for the votaries of the Hindu art also to cast similar images for their divinities.

The most impressive early groups roughly datable through the entire 9th century A.D. with the clear probability of an early formative stages in later 8th century A.D. are from Peruntottam (3 examples of Vishnu), Indian Museum/Vishnu of Trivandrum Museum, Vishnu (Varadaraja) from Valudavur (Tiruchchi district). Their early origin is tenuously presumed on the basis of Tirumangai alvar's traditional link with the Nagapattinam Buddhist *Viharas* which he is said to have raided for gold and metal for his own religion. The style, such as it is, of the earliest among them is part of the later Pallava art pool and it would serve our purpose well and not violate any art norm if they are to be placed in the 9th century A.D. The more important aspects to be noted are : (a) they are mostly of Vishnu (standing as well seated); (b) they are all not more than 10-15 cm. height; (c) they are all found in Thanjavur district. (close to Kaveripattinam port and Nagappattinam which developed as important Buddhist centres in that period) and Tiruchchi district; and (d) they are invariably of a style seemingly imitated from the later Pallava stone sculptures notwithstanding a degree of standardization in the icon. There are weighty socio-political reasons to think that Cholamandalam had the potential geographical situation for fostering the most vigourous impulses of art. These arise because of the assured fertility of land which enabled a high economic level of prosperity attainable for even the local Cheiftains with all that such agrarian prosperity implied. They were impacted by three of the most powerful dynasties of the south in that period, namely Pallavas and Pandyas immediately to their north and south and by Badami Chalukyas peripherally. It would be appropriate to digress on this important factor here. The four zones of Tamil Nadu, namely Tondaimandalam, Pandimandalam, Cholamandalam and Kongu-Cheramandalam had each a distinctive *penchant* for art absorption to a variable degree. Tondaimandalam was politically closer to the puissant Satavahana art centres, and at a subsequent stage, the Karnataka Chalukyas. The land was evidenced by an active

legacy of stone and iron metal-craft from Neolithic to Iron Age times and, further it was the seat of political power in Tamil Nadu at the earliest stage, already from about *C.* 4th century A.D. Its absorption of Vedic Brahmanism, Jainism and Buddhism alike into the social matrix was a catalyst for cultural development. However, the land was not sufficiently self supporting or fertile. Irrigation tank had to be constantly serviced, people on the western fringes were still in semi-tribal pastoral stage erecting hero-stones to their dead fallen in cattle raid. Hence the germs for economic leadership was *not* there, though socio-cultural leadership was manifest. This is probably one of the reasons why they were interested in Cholamandalam and had their earliest bronze art development in the lower Kaveri Chola soil, though in an art style which was admittedly their own, of the 8th-9th century. Tondaimandalam's art impact was, therefore, from the north, but its economic continuity was tied up with the south.

In the case of Pandimandalam, early in history, it had a coastal trade in pearl fisheries, had its balance of arable land in Tambraparni valley and barren rocky upland, had early impacts from Mauryan region with Jain and other stimulus, had a literary cultural leadership of profound nature in their 'Sangams' (Academies) of Madurai—the capital city, and the capacity to cut and quarry stones with its iron equipment. But it had still its political vision always trained northwards on the Kongu and Cholamandalam, for socio-political efflorescence, being essentially a water-locked zone on three sides; and an aggressive initiative in that direction exposed itself in the early historic times before the Kadungon regime during the *Sangam* epoch, and later, under Kadungon upto the first half of the 10th century A.D. very effectively. It had its main political rivals in the Pallavas and a political cultural liaison in the Chera-Kongu tracts and with Chalukyas in the Karnataka from across Mala Kongam. One of the early kings even intruded up to Mangalapuri (Mangalore). Thus their political impact and to a partial degree economic impact was towards the north-east while their cultural impact was with north-west and across from Karnataka. Kongumandalam was its cultural extension zone and Pandikkodumudi was already its outpost. In the case of Chera-Kongumandalam itself again, they had also a coastline trade heritage and hence sufficient initiative and vigour. They had

hobnobbed in the *'Sangam'* period from their capital Karur with mainland Tamil Nadu-to an equal degree with Cholas at Uraiyur (near Tiruchirappalli) and Pandyas of Madurai. They were having access to and at certain stages control of the upper Kaveri valley. They also had a Neolithic-Iron Age legacy. They were the closest to the Karnataka political source under the Gangas and Chalukyas and yet, their main developing centres of political power shrunk to Chera region by about the 7th-8th century A.D. and their mainland moorings were severed. Hence their development was under Cheras and Adiyamans (linked with Pandyas and Muttaryars and Irukkuvels) but later they had their nexus and nucleus mainly with the west coast in the second Chera empire of Mahodai (Cranaganore) for socio-cultural initiative. Hence, their art expression in the formative stages of architecture, sculpture and bronzes though linked partly with Tamil Nadu, was subsequently almost enitrely with Kerala, being without even a minimum of fertile land, either in the Kongu erea or the Chera area, despite abundant natural resources. Otherwise, their art development was indifferent and though of superior quality, brought out only in patches.

The Cholamandalam, on the other hand, was the most advantageously located in Tamil Nadu, being at the cross roads of three major political powers, namely Cheras, Pandyas and Pallavas and with an assured prosperity and agrarian base which could not only nurture political empiresbut also feed artisans, artists and religious leaders lavishly for creative non-functional refinement of society. Its ideal riparian setting, in the ultimate analysis, was nature's most outstanding gift to it, and hence, on the analogy of the Ganga valley of the north becoming the cradle of the best in art, it became the cradle of the best in brick architectural stucco and stone sculpture and bronze art of Tamil Nadu, from about the end of the 9th century A.D., till which time, however it was politically within the rifle-range of both the Pallavas and Pandyas. It was able to out-manoevre them only by its limitless prosperity which even from a military logistic point of view, was the most significant factor. There is no wonder, therefore, that besides raising the finest of artistic temples, sculptures and bronzes, albeit under the combined legacy and cultural transfusion of Pallava, Chera and Pandya art pools, it was also able to rear up the largest southern Imperial power from the time of Raja Raja

for which both Aditya and Parantaka I, toiled hard in the earlier stages. The sculptural, bronze and mural art of Tamil Nadu has to be studied with this perspective of its socio-political vista. It is Cholamandalam that ultimately represents the ideal toponymic model that evolved, endured and creatively effloresced.

A small group of bronzes which have been found in certain parts of Cholamandalam and elsewhere and have the usual features of Pallava sculptural art have been considered as having ushered bronze casting already in the later Pallava times in the 9th century A.D. But not only are the bronzes too few, but of heterogeneous sizes and almost unconnected with any institutionalized use in temples that they might well be for personal use by devotees. The *utsavabhera* in a temple, on the other hand, when it emerged, had a specific format and was not a linear development of the art of stone sculpture—which indeed these diminutive later Pallava personal bronzes purport to be. For instance, seated bronzes of Varadaraja or Vishapaharana Siva or for that matter the Trivikrama from Singanallur are out of tune with the ritual bronzes which have been fashioned for Vaishnava and Saiva use in temples. Some of the outstanding larger examples, mainly of the dancing Siva category, like the Kuram or Tiruvarankulam dancing Siva which are cited as already of the early 10th century A.D. or earlier even, do not also satisfy the criterion, since their use in the temples have not been systematised at that stage and this happens mainly from the time the *Ananda Tandava* form of dancing Siva is formally cast in bronze. We know that Parantaka was a great devotee of the dancing God of Tillai (Chidambaram) for whom he provided a roof tiling of gold, as tradition avers. But the development of the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram is itself a fairly complicated one, wherein the crystallisation of a particular synthesis of cult, philosophy and tradition, on the art plane-had taken place. Tradition in Tamil Nadu attributes this cosmic dance of *Ananda Tandava* as having taken place in the *Podu* or common at Chidambaram which is apparently a refinement in sanskrit for the Tamil word *Chirrambalam* which can simply mean a lesser temple, as against *Perambalam* (the final abode). In the Chidambaram temple-complex, this shrine of the dancing god does not pertain to the oldest chronological stage which is clearly that of the Mulasthana Siva temple. Entangled into the skein of the early

medieval cult, epoch and circumstance, a *generic* evidence was eked out of the *specific*, on the cosmic dance. The priests of this shrine, called the *Dikshitars* of the *quondam* Kerala extraction and heirs to a *Vaidika* and non-*Agamic* tradition, had already been referred to in the hymnal of both *Nayanmar* saints of Saivism and *Alvar* Saints of Vaishnavism of Tamil Nadu. In the latter, the term *Chitrukuta* is used as a synonym for the place. This term could indeed mean exactly the same as *Chirrambalam* and refer to a *free-standing* structural temple of quadrantal sides and square cross section which type indeed Nataraja shrine assumed its from.

Adverting to the *Tandava* tradition in Saivite iconography, *Ananda Tandava* has stipulations in its from; (a) the deity should have four hands, (b) the upper should hold fire and drum and in lower in *abhaya* and *danda hasta*, (c) one of the two legs should be raised and crossed over parallel to the *danda hasta* while the other leg should trample down on dwarf representing *avidya*, and (d) Ganga should be represented generally in ths *jatabhara*. Siva's dance of *Ananda* or bliss is traditionally witnessed by Uma (as Sivakami) and other associates of the scene are Nandi and Tandu playing the drum. The *Ananda Tandava* philosophy was the particular slant of the *Pratyabhigna* school of Kashmir Saivism with which Abinavagupta's work on the *Natyasastra* (11th century AD) of Bharata was also subsequently associated. A group of such *Pratyabhigna* votaries who were settled in the vicinity of Chidambaram, during the time of Parantaka I, had given shape and finiteness to the theme but they were, by creed, not given to icon worship but only to meditative *sadhanas*. It is the Chola craftmen that converted this concept of the *Panchikritya* of *Ananda Tandava* in to a bronze prototype of ineffable grace and balance, and apparently the Chola kings from Parantaka onwards considered this icon as representing their tutelary deity-because of its cosmic import and synthesised philosophical structure. Indeed, this original contribution of the Cholas in the form of Siva's *Tandava* has its early Pandyan counterpart also in the rare tradition of a *marukal tandava* of Siva with right leg instead of the usual left raised. It is traditionaly averred that God danced with the other leg to please the whims of a Pandyan king. Three great places where the cosmic dance is said to be most famous are : the *Kanaka Sabha* (Golden hall) at Chidambaram, the *Rajata Sabha* at Madurai

and the *Tamra Sabha* at Tirunelveli. Further, this Siva Nataraja image was carved first in stone and later translated into bronze. Such stone carvings start appearing in temples around the turn of the 10th century A.D. or slightly earlier. But bronze images are certainly not earlier than the latter part of the reign of Parantaka I and get into the zenith of their artistic form by the last quarter of the 10th century A.D. This aspect of their range has already been elaborated persuasively with success by Barrett. Some of the more celebrated among these extant now are the Koneriraja-puram bronze (A.D. 970-990), Tiruvarur bronze (A.D. 987) Vriddachalam (*C.* A.D. 981). A detailed list of the rich bronze legacy can be found in an appendix at the end. Of the next stage coinciding with the high noon of Raja Raja I Chola, are those of Tandantottam, Tirukkaraivasal, Tiruvedikkudi, Semangalam, Thanjavur, Tiruppalanam and Punjai. The Nallur Nataraja is the oldest among those already in the earlier half of the 10th century A.D., but with its special guild mannerism of eight hands, it is not ascribable to the *Ananda Tandava milieu.*

The Nataraja bronze and the shrine is always to face south and on the southern wall of the hall ; the orientation seemingly related variously to the Dakshinamurti tradition, the direction of Yama and the direction of the Pandyas whose capital had the most sacred temple to Siva in the south. Raja Raja glorified this God to the utmost and called him *Adavallan* and named all his standard measures weights, etc., after him. Raja Raja's fiat got well permeated into the entire Chola Imperial realm which covered the whole of Tamil Nadu and the other areas of Kerala, Andhra, Karnataka, etc. Every Siva temple in Tamil Nadu has invariably a Nataraja shrine separately in the north side *mahamandapa* facing south or separate shrine outside main shrine structure to the open court. Generally Natraja bronzes and the ritual *utsavabhera* bronzes (which are always Somaskanda or Umamahesvara bronzes in Siva shrines) are not placed together with the deity in the sanctum, seemingly due to the diversity in the tradition between the two, in the form of the *agamic* and non-*agamic* categories.

Returning to the standardisation of *utsava* bronzes in temples, Saivism had diversified the *utsavabhera* images into various manifestations of Siva like Kiratamurti, Tirupurantaka, Chandrasekhara,

Gajantaka, Vrishabhantika, Ardhanari, etc., which are individually used in ritual worship and temple festivals, celebrating different connected episodes. Under Vaishnavism Vishnu's characteristic manifestation are always presented only in sculpture and bronzes generally rarely depict individualistic types though a few like the Trivikrama icon from Singanallur and the Rajamannar bronze from Mannargudi and the Rama bronze group exist but the *utsavabhera* of the main shrine under Vaishnavism showed only the standard Vishnu form in standing-to-attention (*samabhanga*), pose, four armed with, *sankha*, *chakra*, *abhaya* and *varada hastas* irrespective of what type of god is consecrated in the sanctum, whether Anantasayi or Bhuvaraha, Narasimha, Trivikrama, etc. Nor is the *utsavabhera* bronze to be separated from the main deity on normal days but only kept in the sanctum except on festive days when it would be on a processional tour. In Saivite parlance, the bronzes are all kept separately in the *mahamandapa* and Nataraja bronze is kept in the separate Nataraja shrine usually outside the temple on North-East part of the premises, facing south, closest to the *gopuram*.

It would be seen that a majority of the Vaishnavite bronzes of the early periods are of the type of Srinivasa, Varadaraja and Trivikrama types. It is obviously part of an intention to fall in step with the trend of the period in which in the Vaishnavite cave-temples as well as structural temples (pertinently of those pertaining to the 9th century A.D., to which these early groups especially belong) extolled three main aspects of Vishnu, the seated, standing and the reclining. It is important to perceive that Anantasayi or the reclining form, which was one of the oldest Vishnuite icons of India has not been converted into a bronze image. The reason clearly is due to the core character of the icon which represents the creation myth and represents the deity specifically in *Yogic* slumber—a concept which fits well into the *garbhagriha* scheme rather than the *utsavabhera* scheme which represents the dynamic part of the Godhead. In architectural constructions, however, as already seen, this reclining Vishnu is fully utilised along with seated and standing form, in an archetypal triple shrine vertical nexus, all over Tamil Nadu. A variant of the vertical scheme, also put three separate shrines, by the side of one another in a row (much like the *'vimanatrayam'* at Kodumbalur). A famous example of this is at Tirukkurungudi in Tirunelveli

district—a place where the celebrated saint Tirumangai breathed his last. Be this as it may, the concept of Vishnu in his Trivikrama characterization also was included in the variation of statues of Vishnu as early as the *Iyarpa* hymns (V, 77-Ist *Iyarpa* or Poigaiyar) of the first three *alvars* (*Ninran Irundan kidandan Nadandane Kedumamidar*) around the 6th century A.D. The cave-temples of the Pallavas, Muttarayars and Adiyans vied with one another in representing Trivikrama incarnation of Vishnu. The Chalukyas of Badami had already shown the way in this respect. But yet, the Kongu region, which was under the Adiya king Gunasila, who was responsible for the two Vishnuite cave-temples at Namakkal, had depicted Trivikrama in a manner that became virtually the inspiration for the unusual bronze image of this God that we know from Singanallur near Coimbatore. There is no doubt that this school is part of a finite bronze-casting art-movement the complimentary part of which is seen from Kodumudi where the Siva temple has quite a few bronzes of the same school, of Tandava Siva, Tripurantaka and standing Vishnu. The Trivikrama bronze from Singanallur, however, was yet, not likely to be a regular *utsavabhera*, since this image is not conforming to the requirements of *utsavabhera* icon which has to be of a standard form of standing Vishnu in *samabhanga*, four armed, holding *chakra* and *sankha* in the upper hands and *abhaya* and *varada hasta* for the lower hands in the form, known popularly as Srinivasa. All the same, it is symbolic of a stage when the usage for *utsavabhera*, had already been on the offing but the *agamic* standardisation had not yet taken place.

The Trivikrama Vishnu of Singanallur is a landmark and its date namely *C.* 900 is quite relevant to the new developments that were quietly taking place in Vaishnava worship which it heraldad, itself being more an inspired presentation of the icon, most admired by vaishnava saints and artists in the age gone by, and a replica virtually of the panel carving of the theme in the Namakkal cave-temple. From the middle of the 10th century A.D., it is impossible to find any bronze figure of Vishnu other than standing Vishnu, or Krishna (either a baby figure or a Kaliya dance of God) or Rama (in groups with Sita and Lakshmana and Hanuman sometimes) or the Saints of Vaishnavism like Tirumangai, Nam-malvar, etc., and at a slightly later date that of Ramanuja, Andal,

etc. On the saivite side, the bronzes most popular were those of Siva Nataraja, Kalyanasundara, Vrishabhantika Siva, Tripurantaka, Kirata, Skanda, Ganesa, Chandesvara, and the triple saints of Saivism first, those of Sambanda, Appar and Sundarar and a century later that of Manikkavachakar, besides, Markandeya, etc. Among the female divinities, Sri and Bhu for Vishnu, Rukmini and Satyabhama for Krishna developed besides various types of Parvati or Uma, Ardhanari, Kali or Durga of certein kinds. These images proliferated during the early medieval times in hundreds of temples developing into several regional schools of the late Pandya and Vijayanagara times, before they became stereotypes of these divinities without any creative appeal. With the advent of the 18th century as in Kerala where the bronzes continue the folk developments, this overtakes them in Tamil Nadu and is a continuing feature of its religious life even now-reflected overtly by folk presentatian of the theme in these regions.

F. Later Medieval elaborations

The advent of Vijayanagara political authority over Tamil Nadu can be placed around the time of Sayana Udayar, son of Kampana I in the middle of the 14th century A.D. However, it was consolidated only after the spectacular military success of Kumarakampana II, son of Bukka I who was involved in the truimphal entry into Madurai after routing the transient hold of the Sultanate on Madurai, in the sixties of the 14th century—an event celebrated in the *'Madura Vijayam'* epic written by his wife Gangadevi. He interested himself closely with the reorganisation of religious worship in celebrated temples which had been disorganised during the earlier decades of the Khilji-Malik Kafur thrust in the South and Sundara Pandya's common cause with them against his brother and rival Vira Pandya; Srirangam temple, where even the *utsavabhera* had been shifted elsewhere at Singavaram near Gingee, etc., during the turbulent times, was re-established by Gopana, one of his two able generals. The worship at Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi, long since suspended was also got revived by Kampana II, as his inscriptions show. It was during, however, the time of Harihara II (A.D. 1377-1404), son and successor of Bukka I that the entire Tamil country came under Vijayanagara yoke. It is interesting that the area of Tondaimandalam and certain other regions also equally well, were continued to be designated by

their erstwhile political names given to them during the Cholā times like Jayankondacholamandalam. There appears to have been some uprise against this state of affairs during the time of his successor Virupaksha I, as indicated by Nuniz and the rebellion was properly quelled and the area re-conquered. Of his successors, the rule of Devaraya II (A.D. 1422-1446) was the most notable in so far as political sway over Tamil Nadu and also Kerala, and cultural regeneration are concerned, as elquently attested to be Razak and Nuniz. The succeeding periods reflect the deep difficulties and threat of invasions from the combined forces variously of Bahmani kings Ahmad Shah and Muhammad shah II, the latter in league with the Orissan Chieftain Kapilesvara Gajapati in the sixties of the 15th century A.D., resulting in the chief towns of Nellore, Chittoor, Chingleput, Tiruchchi and Thanjavur districts having been captured, though for a short duration. Close on the heels of the recession of the Gajapati threat and invasions into the Vijayanagara Kingdom, the Saluva line under Narasimha (till then a governor of Tondaimandalam with headquarters at Chandragiri) usurped the throne in A.D. 1486 replacing the Sangama dynasty. Himself a devotee of Vishnu, temples at Tirupati, Kanchipuram and Srirangam received his special attention, directly or indirectly. Undoubtedly the most illustrious king of the dynasty was Krishnadevaraya (A.D. 1509-1529) the brother of Vīranarasimha. His reign brought great glory to the entire lower South including Tamil Nadu. Gajapati, Bahmani and Bijapur Sultan and all other rebel cheftains were curbed. In Kanchipuram in Varadaraja temple alone, as many as 16 inscriptions of his are found, spread over his entire reign and the city itself (with its main temples) was marked by royal visits more than once, Equally well-spread were the religious services and constructions arranged by his successor like Achuta Raya, as noted at Chidambaram and elsewhere. The last days of the empire, after the debacle at Talikota saw Sriranga I, Venkata II and III reduced to mere shadows with the empire restricted both in size and in revenue. Madurai, Thanjavur and Gingee became in due course by the first half of the 17th century A.D.. independent and we see a Nayaka supplementary phase in politics and arts. It was virtually an over-elaboration and continuance of the Vijayanagara tradition in art and architecture, as evidenced at Kanchipuram, Chidambaram, Srirangam, Vellore, Madurai, Gingee, etc. and revelled in

granite craftsmanship of an intricate character. The thousand pillared-halls with their engaged compound pillars showing rearing horses, caparisoned fully, complete with attendant and outrider, were an outstandingly favourite creation of their's as seen especially at Seshagirirayar Mandapa at Srirangam and Kalyana Mandapam at Vellore. The lack of any image niches on the wall of the temples which were, however, quite elaborately relieved by frets, offsets and intricate rafter scheme on the inner side of the cornice, balanced by rather rich stucco works on the superstructure is again a Vijayanagara legacy. Vellore, Gingee and Thanjavur give outstanding examples of the Nayaka stone craftsmanship in temples in much the same way Madurai, Srirangam and Kanchi gave in the Vijayanagara times. In terms of separate shrines, it might be difficult to list out Vijayanagara temples in Tamil Nadu, since its main formulation on its own steam lay in Karnataka in the metropolition (Vijayanagara Hampi) area and in Nellore, Cuddapah and Kurnool districts. In Tamil Nadu, where virtually under Chola munificence and close patronage, there was saturation point reached in the erection of main temples in villages, Vijayanagara rulers or military dictators had mostly to add to the ostentation of the temple layout by massive *gopuras*, *prakaras*, *mandapas*, etc., of which several categories like *Vasantamandapa*, *Tulabhara mandapa*, *Kalyana mandapa*, *Dolotsava mandapa*, etc. were known. *Snapana mandapas* or *Abhisheka mandapas* had already become common during the earlier stages of the late Chola period. As noted elsewhere, the *Tayar* shrine, for the main consort or Lakshmi of Vishnu, was one of the most systematically added shrine parts of an already existing complex, though it is conceded that this *Tayar* shrine movement had started already from the first millennium itself and progressively changed its location, orientation and pattern under the later Cholas, second Pandyan empire and the early Vijayanagara. The positioning of *Tayar* shrine immediately to the south-west or the first *avarana* facing east became common in Vijayanagara times, and to balance it and to revive the full plenitude of the female potential associated with Vishnu, Andal or Godadevi (embodiment of Bhudevi) was located at the north-west of the main shrine again facing east. Such had become the fixation of the orientation of the *Devi* shrine in terms of both south-west corner and eastern orientation and that this was scrupulously followed even where the main temple is not itself

facing east but west, as in the celebrated Varadaraja temple at Kanchi, thereby making these two shrines face into each other.

The *jagati* terrace-like *upapitha* projection under the *adhisthana*, the incessantly scaled or ribbed *kumuda* moulding, the preference for the *kumbha panjara* and *sala panjara* of the *bhadra* projection, *salilantara* recess or bay, the *pumunai* or the overhanging bud shape of the corbel, the indentation of the edge of the cornices wherever they occur, the structural formalisation of the *valabhi* zone into a regular zone of rafter terminals, and the perfectly chased and crisp finish of the stone work and scroll work surface ornamentations are all the hall marks of the constructions of shrines, whose superstructure was, in 'mixed' style invariably, preferred in brick and stucco workmanship. An interesting dichotomy in the style as between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu was, that, while in the former, the *sukanasa* projection of tower, resting on the *antarala* was a diagnostic feature, this is religiously omitted in Tamil Nadu where the regional style had always done without it. These regional variations play a great part. For instance, invariably temples of the medieval period in the Kongumandalam (comprising Coimbatore district and parts of Salem and Dharmapuri districts), irrespective of whether they are of Hindu and Jain affiliation, opt for the heavy, lofty, square sectioned stone *dvaja-stambha*, almost on the parallel of the Jain *manastambha* thus making them borrow this idea from the South Kanara and south Mysore Jain monuments, attesting also to the deep inroads of Jainism in Kongu country. Similarly also in South Arcot and certain parts of North Arcot districts, in the Nayaka period, this very feature is adopted by Hindu temples also, as at Gingee in the Venkataramana temple, etc. There was indeed a *penchant* for Vijayanagara craftmen to erect lofty pillars in the temple *mandapas* with a floating tower crest on the top and several such examples can be seen in Kanchi, Srirangam, Chidambaram, etc. Sometimes these pillars are of a stilted kind and fully covered with Puranic as well as purely ornate carvings on their faces. Nayakas continued this tradition with less of surface details.

Appendix I

Conspectus of Jaina monuments in Tamil Nadu

Name of the place 1	*Nature of the art vestiges* 2	*Approximate age* 3
Early Phase : *Natural cavern, beds with or without inscriptions* :		
1) Araichalur (Coimbatore)	Polished beds and records, drip-ledges	1st century B.C. to 6th century A.D.
2) Chitaral (Kanyakumari)		
3) Alagarmalai (Madurai)		
4) Anaimalai ,,		
5) Karungalakkudi ,,		
6) Kongarpuliyangulam ,,		
7) Kilavaluva ,,		
8) Mangulam ,,		
9) Nagamalai ,,		
10) Karadipatti ,,		

1	2	3
11) Uttamapalayam (Madurai)		
12) Mamandur (North Arcot)		
13) Vilapakkam ,,		
14) Vallimalai ,,		
15) Armamalai ,,		
16) Perunagar ,,		
17) Kunnakkudi (Ramanathapuram)		
18) Marugalathalai (Tirunelveli)		
19) Kalugumalai ,,		
20) Sittannavasal (Pudukkotti)		
21) Tiruchchi (Tiruchchi)		
22) Pugalur ,,		
23) Narttamalai (Pudukkottai)		
24) Tirunatharkunru (South Arcot)	The latest among them, Tirunatharkunru represents an early Vatteluttu stage of Tondaimandalam. It records also the *Nishedikai* of one Chandiranandi who perhaps died after 'fasting' for 51 days. This is the *'Sallekana'* process of jain	Late 6th century A.D.

1	2	3
	austerity for casting off the mortal coil.	
Early Copper plate charters :		
Earliest Pallava Copper Plate grant in Tamil Nadu (of Pallankoil).	Refers to the grant of some lands in Perunagar village, as *Pallichandam* for Vajranandi guru of Tirupparuttikunram, in the 6th year of Simhavishnu.	Early 6th century A.D.
Cave-art phase :		
Peechiparai (Chokkampatti), Malayadikurichi, Sittannavasal (Arivarkoil), Umayandar cave (Tirupparankunram)	Single rear sanctum or double sanctum facing each other on the front and with hall in between; pillars square with medallions, *taranga* corbels and niches with reliefs. Inscriptions at Malayadikurichi and Sittannavasal referring respectively to foundation of the period in the 17th year of the Pandyan king Maran Sendan of the Kadungon line and repairs of Avanipasekhara (Srimara Srivallabha). Sculpture at Malayadikiruchi and Umayandarkoil are deliberately damaged and chiselled off apparently in a stage of acrimonious Jaina-Hindu religious conflict.	7th-8th century A.D.

1	2	2
Bas relief phase :		
Kalugumalai, Aivarmalai or Ayiraimalai at Ayyampalayam, Karuppannaswamiparai (Uttamapalayam), Nagamalai, Karadipatti, Kilakuilkudi, Anaimalai, (all near Madurai) ; Kilavalavu Tirumurtimalai, Vilapakkam, Vallimalai, Kudagumalai, Chitaral (Tiruchcharanattumalai), Kallil (near Perumbavur, Kerala).	Inscribed records at Kalugumalai ; An important record of Pandya king Varaguna II dated to A.D. 870 at Aivarmalai. Vattaluttu records at Nagamalai, Karadipaddi, Anaimalai, etc. Records in North Arcot District at Vilapakkam, Vallimalai (of the Gangas), Chitaral, etc. The last mentioned in Kanyakumari District has a 28th year record of Vikramaditya Varaguna, the Ay king, granting for certain services at the temple here. References to monks from Tirunarungondai, Kalugumalai and Kudagumalai are made at this place in the records.	8th-10th century A.D.
Kudagumalai (Pudukkottai District).	Natural cavern with beds, Jain *bas-reliefs*. A record of the 4th-5th year of a Rajakesari (probably 9th-10th century A.D.) refers to gifts in honour of a *Tirthankara* of the Tiruppallimalai in Vadaseruvai Nadu.	1st century A.D. and 8th-10th century A.D.
Tenimalai	Cave-beds, reliefs, records, mentioning Malayadhirajan a monk patronised by an Irukkuvel chief.	1st century A.D. and 8-10th century A.D.

1	2	3
Jain temple ruins at Chettipatti	Early Chola and Irukkuvel style of temples with record referring to a monk Udaiya Matisagaran arugan-acharyan of the time of Raja Raja I. Monument attached to the temple is called Ainnurruvar-Perumpalli endowed by Jayavira Perilamayan-a merchant of the 500 guild.	9th-14th century A.D.
Sembattur	On Palli Urani channel, *Tirthankara* sculptures.	11th century A.D.
Narttamalai	Two monasteries at Aluruttimaiai and Bommaimalai (anciently having Vada Tiruppalli and Ten-Tiruppalli)	8th-11th century A.D.
Sadayapparai (near Tirugokarnam).	Had a Jain monastery and temples and had an image with record of the 24th year of a Sundara Pandyan calling this *matha*, as Perunarkilli Chola Perumpalli, in Kallarrupalli.	10th-13th century A.D.
Velavanpatti	Images of *Tirthankaras*, etc.	10th-11th century A.D.
Alattur	Mahavira image	11th century A.D.
Annavasal	Near Palli Urani here, *Tirthankara* images.	12th century A.D.

1	2	3

(Other sites of similar interest from Pudukkottai are Mylappatti with ruined Jaina temples on the hill ; Nanjur, with loose sculptures kept on a platform ; Alangudipatti and Kannangudi with seated Jain carvings in the field ; Puttambur with Jaina images in the field ; all datable from the 10th-14th century A.D.)

Structural architectural stages :

Tirupparuttikunram Chandranatha temple (Chingleput District)	Later Pallava architecture and motifs repaired and renovated in the upper floor shrine and sometime in the square *sikhara* part which are in brick and stucco. The lower part of the temple which is in sandstone, does not contain any shrine but only affords access to the upper shrine. The plinth mouldings are of the *pratibandha* variety without any *vedi* on top. *A sandhara* shrine that could have had two shrines in ground and upper *talas* originally as in the Jain model at several other areas.	2nd half of the 8th century A.D.
Armamalai near Malayambattu (North Arcot)	Mud brick and mud plastered walled temple—apparently for Jainism, as shown from paintings on the cave roof (of *Samavasarana*, *dikpalas*, etc.), and sculp-	9th-10th century A.D.

1	2	3
	tures and inscribed fragments in the valley and a temple in the village also for Jainism. They seem to suggest Rashtrakuta art impact. In the Udayendiram Plates this cave has seemingly been mentioned as the *'lohita guha'*, among the boundary features of donee village.	
Vijayamangalam (Mettupudur) Chandranatha temple, (Coimbatore District)	Ganga style brick temple with single *tala* and octagonal *sihkara*. Added to in later Chola and Vijayanagara periods ; Carvings of Adinatha, Ananthanatha, Mahavira, Kushmandini Yakshi; the oldest records refer to the *nishedikai* of one Puliyappai sister of Chamundaraya, the Ganga General. In Chola times, it was called Vira Sanghata perumpalli, as in Kulottunga II record of A.D. 1163. A Vijayanagara record of A.D. 1412 in Harihara II's reign is also available referring to land grant.	9-15th century A.D.
Tingalur (Coimbatore District)	Pushpanatha (9th *Tirthankara*) temple referred to in	11th century A.D.

1	2	3
	record as Chandravasati ; Additions were made during A.D. 1045 by Konattan Vikrama Cholan, with title Simhalanataka.	
Dharmapuri	Jain temples built during Nolamba Mahendradhi-raja's times by tradesmen Nidhiyanna and Chandi-yanna and land grants were given in A.D. 892 in the village Mulapalli. Kanaka, Sena Siddhanta Bhatara, disciple of Vijayasena Sid-dhanta Bhatara was in charge. These records are found on the pillars of the Mallikarjuna temple here, which is a beautiful Nolamba temple. Another temple called Nagara Jina-laya in a record at Mudi-kondan near here is dated to 12th century A.D.	9th-12th century A.D.
Tirumalai (North Arcot District)	Built in Raja Raja's time, Kundavai Jinalaya on the top of the hill, with grants made by Rajendra I in his 12th year. Dharmadevi Shrine with Gommatesvara and two attendants of the (11th century A.D.) Chola-Ganga mixed style; Dharmadevi	10th-16th century A.D.

1	2	3
	figure of Vijayanagara style; painted caves; Pandya addition to structural temple at the base (in 10th year of Virapandya). Another of 12th year of Rajanarayana Sambuvaraya and also of a son of Kampana Udayar dated to Saka 1296. A record in the painted cave of the establishment of a *Yakshi* image by Arishtanemi Acharyan and another on the doorway referring to gift by Adiyaman of the Chera race with capital at Tagadur; monolithic Neminatha image on hill top; Vardhamana and the Neminatha temples in typical Pandya and Vijayanagara style at the foot with a *gopuram* (both later).	
Tirupparuttikunram	Vardhamana temple has the oldest record of Kulottunga I granting villages, tax-free to the temple; The next record is that of the Alagiya Pillai probably referring to Kopperunjinga Kadavaraya in *C.* A.D. 1243. The Vijayanagara record is that of Iruguppa, General of	11th-16th century A.D.

1	2	3
	the time of Harihara II, dated in A.D. 1382, constructing a *mahamandapa* for musical concerts and granting Mahendramangalam (near Mamandur) to this temple for maintenance. In this complex, there are the apsidal shrines for Vardhamana (or Trailokyanatha) in the middle of the court, with two shrines on either side dedicated to Pushpadanta (9th *Tirthankara*) and Dharmadevi (Ambika) *yakshi* of Neminatha (22nd *Tirthankara*). The Trikuta basti for Padmaprabha, Vasupujya and Parsvanatha occurs adjoining the above main group. A common *Kalyanamandapa* for all these is the Sangitamandapa of Iruguppa, carrying murals on ceilings registering the life of Rishabhadeva, Ist *Tirthankara*, Vardhamana and Neminatha as also Krishna (duly labelled in Tamil and grantha), as mentioned in *Sri Purana*. Other shrines in the temple are for Brahmadeva, Munisuvrata and a (later) Rishabhadeva temple. Bronzes	

1	2	3
	in this temple include, Brahmadeva Yaksha with Purna and Pushkala, Padmavati, Dharmadevi, standing Dharanindra and Padmavati, Parsvanatha on a pedestal, standing Vardhamana with Matanga and Siddayika also standing, Jvalamalini seated, Sarasvati, Bahubali, Pancha Parameshti or Nava Devata Yantra, and a standing Anantanatha bronze.	
Tirunarungondai	Named as Narpattennayiraperumpalli ; Record of the 9th year of Kulottunga gifts taxes to temple by one Virasekhara Kadavarayan; 13th year of Rajadhiraja refers to gift of money for lamp to *yakshi* in western temple (Melir-palli). The main temple is now called as Appandanatha temple; there is a Chandrantha shrine also here. One Viradandi from here had visited Chitaral, as noted by record in the latter place.	10th-13th century A.D.
Pirudiyur (North Arcot)	Vardhamana temple with image in sanctum broken	11th-18th century A.D.

1	2	3
	and replaced by a later image. Devi shrine in north-east facing south. The first *tala prastara* shows Rishabhanatha, Sambhavanatha and Chandranatha, in stucco, with *yakshis*.	
Nagerkoil (Kanyakumari District)	Six Jaina images in this Nagarkoil *palli*, of Parsvanatha, Vardhamana and Padmavati. It was consecrated to Hinduism during the time of Bhuta Vira-Marthanda Varma. *Gopura* entrance called 'Mahameru Maligai' again reminiscent of Jain usage.	

Appendix 2

Dispersal of Cult ideas in Tamil Nadu and Kerala

Theme 1	*Tondaimandalam* 2	*Cholamandalam* 3	*Pandimandalam* 4	*Kongu-Chera Nadu* 5
Aja-Ekapada	Shore Temple western most entrance *C.* A.D. 8th century	11th century A.D.	Madurai 13th century A.D.	—
Ananta-sayi or reclining Vishnu	6th century A.D. Shore Temple, rock carving	5th century A.D. Srirangam, Tirumayam 8th Century A.D.	Kudalalagar, 8th century A.D.	Namakkal *C.* A.D. 740 ; Trivandrum 8th century A.D.
	Continues	till late	medieval	times.
Ardhanari	7th century A.D. Dharma-raja Ratha	Kodumbalur 9th century A.D., Tiruvedikkudi 9th century A.D.	Madurai 13th century A.D.	Tiruchengodu 9th-10 century A.D.
Dakshina-murti	7th century A.D. Dharma-, raja Ratha, Kanchipuram, Tirukkaluk-kunram	Vijayalaya-cholisvaram, mid 9th century A.D.	Kalugumalai monolith, *C.* A.D. 800	Tirunandikara *C.* 8th century A.D., Irunilam-code *C.* 9th century A.D.

1	2	3	4	5
Ganesa	None till (*C.* 700), Vallam cave-temple addition, and Rajasimha's time in Shore Temple tower *C.* A.D. 725	In Muttarayar cave-temples *C.* 8th century A.D.	In Tiruchchi lower cave, *C.* A.D. 675 and in all Pandya cave-temples (*C.* A.D. 700-800)	Ayirurpara cave-temple *C.* 8th century A.D.
Harihara	Dharmaraja Ratha 7th century A.D.	—	Kunnakudi, Pillayarpatti *C.* A.D. 700	Many temples in *linga* form or in murals *C.* ·11th century A.D.
Jvara-haresvara	Kanchi 10th century A.D., Jvaraharesvara temple	—	Ukkirankottai *C.* 9th century A.D.	Taramangalam 13th century A.D.
Jyeshtha	Addition to Vallam Cave *C.* A.D. 700	9th century A.D. or later	Tirupparan-kuram A.D. 773	In Chola times
Lakulisa	Dharmaraja Ratha 7th century A.D.	Devarmalai *C.* A.D. 750	Arittapatti *C.* A.D.	—
Lingadhara	Muktesvara Kanchi, *C.* 8th century A.D.	Kilayur *C.* 892 A.D., Kodumbalur *C.* 885 A.D.	—	—

1	2	3	4	5
Lingod-bhava	Kailasanatha Kanchi *C.* A.D. 725	Tirumayam Siva cave *C.* A.D. 700	Kunnakudi *C.* A.D. 700	Not before 11th century A.D.
Pancha-vira	Tiruvallikeni, Madras, Tiruchanur *C.* 8th century A.D.	Nachchiyarkoil and Terazundur, *C.* Late 8th century A.D. or early 9th century	Tiruttangal upper temple *C.* A.D. 900	—
Sapta-matrikas	Pidari sculp-tures *C.* 8th century A.D., Mahabalipuram	Malayadipatti *C.* A.D. 812	Kunnattur, Tirukkalakkudi *C.* A.D. 700	Madakkunram, Angadipuram *C.* A.D. 1300
Trinity	Mahabalipuram *C.* 7th century A.D., Dharma-raja Ratha	Tirumayam Vishnu Cave *C.* A.D.	Tirumalapuram cave *C.* A.D. 750, Tiruchchi cave late 7th century A.D.	Trivandrum 8th century A.D., Mitrananda-puram 12th century A.D., Namakkal *C.* A.D. 740
Parvati in *panchagni tapas*	—	—	Tiruvalisvaram *C.* A.D. 900-960	—

Earliest example given under each category and region).

Appendix 3

Inventory of select bronzes of Tamil Nadu

For illustrations, see : P.R. Srinivasan, *Bronzes of South India*, Bulletin of Government Museum, Madras (N.S.), Vol. VIII (1963) ; Douglas Barrett, *Chola bronzes;* and C. Sivaramamurti, *South Indian Bronzes*.

Antecedent stages and 'anonymous' cases, now outside India

Standing Buddhas from Buddhapadu : (Andhra Pradesh) — Now in the British Museum. — Early 5th-6th Cent. A.D.

Natesa—Bank of Italy, Rome..........*C.* A.D. 900
Parvati—Freer Gallery, Washington..........*C.* A.D. 925
Parvati—Metropalitan Museum, New York..........*C.* A.D. 975
Bhudevi—Victoria and Albert Museum, London..........Early 12th Cent. A.D.
Natesa -do- *C.* A.D. 1200
Chandikesvara—Eton College, U.K. ....*C.* A.D. 1200
Chandrasekhara—Musee Guimet, Paris..........*C.* A.D. 1200
Nataraja from Sivapurum..........(to be returned to India) *C.* A.D. 950-975

Age brackets	*Tondaimandalam*	*Pandimandalam*	*Cholamandalam*	*Chera and Kongumandalam*
1	2	3	4	5
Early Phase (900-1045)	Kuram Natesa *C.* A.D. 900, Tiruvalangadu Somaskanda *C.* A.D. 900, Siva as Kiratamurti and Arjuna-Tiruvetkalam near Chidambaram *C.* 900, Bhikshatana from Tirunamanallur, (S. Arcot Dist.) *C.* 675	Poruppumettupatti (Madurai Dist.) Nataraja *C.* A.D. 900, Kuttalam Nataraja, early half 10th century A.D.	Vishnu standing and Vishnu as Srinivasa from Peruntottam (Thanjavur Art Gallery) A.D. 850-900, Varadaraja Vishnu (Thanjavur Dist.) Indian Museum *C.* 9th century, Valududaiyur, Govt. Museum Madras, Late 9th century, Maitreya (Copper gilt) Thanjavur Dist., mid 9th century, Tripurantaka *C.* 900 A.D., Vishapaharana (Kilappudanur)	Vishnu Srinivasa (Trivandrum Museum), mid 9th cent., Standing deity (four armed, hands damaged) 9th Century (Trivandrum Museum), Trivikrama from Singanallur *C.* 900 A.D., Vinadhara from Belur (Salem Dist.) *C.* 925 A.D., Vishnu from Kodumudi A.D. 950-975, Tripurantaka group Kodumudi *C.* 950 A.D.,

1	2	3	4	5
			C. 900 A.D., Simhanada Lokesvara from Nagapattinam *C.* 900 A.D., Nallur Natesa *C.* 925 A.D., Buddha from Nagapattinam *C.* 925 A.D., standing Subramanya Kilayur (Thanjavur Dist.) *C.* 925 A.D., Vinadhara from Tiruppurambiam *C.* 950 A.D., Tripurantaka from Tandantottam *C.* 950 A.D., Chandikesvara from Tiruvenkadu (Thanjavur Dist.) *C.* 975 A.D.,	Natesa from Kodumudi *C.* 950 A.D.

1	2	3	4	5
			Natesa from Okkur *C.* 975-1000 A.D., Paruttiyur Rama group *C.* 875 A.D., Somaskanda from Sivapuram *C.* 975 A.D., Rama group from Vadakkupanayur *C.* 1000 A.D.	
Middle Phase (1045-1350)	Tiruvalangadu Natesa *C.* 1050-1100, Solamadevi from Kalahasti (where abouts unknown) *C.* 1050-1100, Rama from Valarpuram (N. Arcot Dist.) *C.* 1050 A.D.,	Jain Tirthankara near Sivaganga, *C.* A D. 1200, Vishnu from Sermadevi, mid 13th century, Parvati from Kuttalam 13th century	Subramanya from Tiruudaikkudi *C.* A.D. 1000, Natesa from Tiruarangulam (Pudukkottai Dist.) *C.* A.D. 1000, Tiruvenkadu Kalyanasundara group	Ganesa (Trivandrum Museum) *C.* 1100 A.D. (From Thanjavur Dist.), Vinadhara (Trivandrum Museum) *C.* 1100 A.D., Sundaramurti from Kodumudi

1	2	3	4	5
	Rajamannar, Valarpuram *C.* 1050-1100, Kannappa Nayanar Tiruvalangadu *C.* 1050-1100 A.D., Kalyana-sundara from Tiruvottiyur end of 11th century A.D., Kulottunga III from Kalahasti mid 13th century (Chittoor Dist.), Somaskanda from Kailaiyur (S. Arcot Dist.), mid 13th century A.D., Ambika (Jain) from Singanikuppam (S. Arcot Dist.), mid 13th century Mahavira from Singanikuppam		(Thanjavur Art Gallery) *C.* 11th century A.D., Vris-havahana Siva (Thanjavur Art Gallery) 1011 A.D., Ardhanari from Tiruvenkadu early 11th cent. A.D., Nataraja with Sivakami, Brihadisvara temple, Thanja-vur *C.* A.D. 1010, Tripurantaka (Great temple, Thanjavur, now in Thanjavur Art Gallery) *C.* 1010 A.D., Jatamakuta Lokesvara from Nagapattinam Early 11th century A.D., Subra-manya, Gangai-kondachola-	*C.* 1200 A.D.

1	2	3	4	5
	mid. 13th cent. A.D.		puram *C.* 1025 A.D., Bhikshatana from Tiruvenkadu (now in Thanjavur Art Gallery) *C.* 1048 A.D., Seated Buddha with florid *prabhavali* from Nagapattinam *C.* 1050-1100 A.D., Jambhala and Avalokitesvara (Nagapattinam) *C.* 1100 A.D., Shadakshara Early 12th century A.D., Lokesvara, Avalokitesvara, Tara and Maitreya from Nagapattinam	

1	2	3	4	5
Late Phase 1350-1750 A.D.	Kannappa group from Kalahasti mid 15th cent. A.D., Krishna Deva Raya from Tirumala (Tirupati) Early 16th century A.D.	Kaliyakrishna, Kudalalagar, Madurai *C.* 15th century, Krishna with Rukmini and Satyabhama from Sermadevi *C.* 15th century Krishna from Ambasamudram, early 16th century, Kankalanatha, Kuttalam, Late 16th century	Karaikal Ammaiyar (Dharmapuram Mutt); (a) youthful; (b) Wizened mid 17th century A.D. Late 12th century A.D., Vrishavahana from Gangaikondacholapuram *C.* Late 12th century A.D.	Dvarapala (Govt. Museum, Trichur) *C.* 17th century A.D., Durga (Govt. Museum) Trichur *C.* 18th century A.D.

Appendix 4

Select Architectural Landmarks in the evolving Temple expansion of Tamil Nadu and Kerala

Sites/Stages 1	*Tondaimandalam* 2	*Cholamandalam* 3	*Pandimandalam* 4	*Chera-Kongu region* 5
Rock-cut stages and models (A.D. 580-675)	Mandagapattu, Siyamangalam, Dalavanur, Mahabalipuram, (Mahishamardini cave, Adi-varaha cave and Varahamandapam)	Tiruchi upper cave, Tiruchchi lower cave (Pandya), Tiruvellari unfinished cave, Thirumayam, Malayadipatti Siva cave, Malayadipatti Vishnu cave, Tiruanikkal cave-temple (near Tiruvellari)	Chokkampatti, Malayadikurichchi, Vadikkottai, Tirupparankunram Umayandar cave, Arittapatti, Kunnakkudi, Tirukkalakkudi, Tirumalapuram, Tirupparankunram main cave,	Tirunandikkara cave-temple, Aiyurpara cave-temple, Kaviyur, Irunilamkodu, Trikkur, Namakkal (two cave-temples)

1	2	3	4	5
Monolithic stage A.D. 645-675	Dharmaraja Ratha, Arjuna Ratha, Bhima Ratha, Draupadi Ratha, Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha, Valayan Kuttai and Pidari Rathas	Nil	Vettuvan Koil, Kalugumalai	Nil
Early structural stages	Mukundanayanar, Mahabalipuram, Piravatana, Kanchi, Kailasanatha Kanchi, Talagirisvara, Panamalai, Shore-Temple, Mahabalipuram, Vaikunthaperumal, Kanchi, Muktesvara Kanchi, Sundara varada Uttiramerur, Matangasvara Kanchi, Chandranatha	Renganatha temple, Srirangam (Sanctum), Aivarkoil at Kodumbalur, Kailasanatha at Tirupattur, Vijayalayacholisvaram, Kaliyapatti, Nangavaram, Muvarkoil Kodumbalur, Kilayur, Avanikandaresvaram, Subramanya, temple at Kannanur,	Erichchaudaiyar, temple at Ambasamudram, Talinatha, Tirupattur, Granite *Sikhara* of outer temple at Tirukkurungudi, Siva temple Tiruvalisvaram, Nellaiappar Tirunelveli, Chokkanachchiyamman Uikirankkottai, Tennalagar temple Sivalapperi, Talayayamanon-	Tirumittakkodu, Tirunarayanapuram, Tirukulasekharapuram, Mitrandapuram three temples, Kattilmadam stone temple, Koranganatha Srinivasanallur, Vijayamangalam, Mattupatti Chandranatha (Jain) temple, Mahimalesvara Erode, Siva temple, Vellalur, Ardhanari

1	2	3	4	5
	Tiruparuttikun-ram, Adipuris-vara Tiruvorriyur	Sundaresvara, temple at Tiru-kkattalai, Siva temple at Vali-kandapuram	manisvara, Vishnu temple at Vijayana-rayanam, Rajagopala temple Mannarkoil, Kailasanatha Gangaikondan, Siva temple Korkai	temple, Tiruchchengodu.
Mukhya Vimanas	Tiruvadigai, Virattanam	Brihadisvara, Thanjavur and Gangaikonda-cholapuram, Airavatisvara Darasuram, Kampahares-vara temple at Tirbhuvanam, Sayavanesvara at Sayakkadu	Nil	Nil
Temples of the	Virattana Tirut-tani, Mulana-	Lalgudi, Tiru-vidaimarudur,	Kudalalgar, Madurai,	Siva temple Taramangalam,

1	2	3	4	5
developed structural stage upto late medieval times	thesvara, Bahur, Visalesvara, Velakanampudi, Jalanatha temple Takkolam, Vriddhagirisvara, Vriddhachalam, Vishnu temple Ennayiaram, Thirumanallur, Grama, Tondamanadu (plinth only), Tirupparuthikunram Vardhamana temple-complex, Jalakantesvara temple, Vellore, Venkataramana temple, Gingee, Gopuras of Tirukalukunram and Tiruvannamalai	Tiruvaiyaru, Venugopala temple, in Srirangam complex, Subramanya temple in Brihadesvara temple, Thanjavur	Saumyanarayana temple at Tirukkoshtiyur, Umamahesvara temple at Uttarakosamangai, Puvananatha temple, Koilpatti, Meenkshi-Sundaresvara Madurai, Siva temple at Krishnapuram, Kasinatha temple, Tenkasi, Vatapatrasayi gopuram, Srivilliputtur	Varadaraja temple Sankaridrug, Siva temple Perur, Siva temple Sarkarperiyapalayam, Siva temple Bhavani, Siva-temple Vijayamangalam, Madattilappan, Peruvanam, Vishnu temple, Tiruchambaram, Siva temple, Kantiyur, Tiruvalla, Krishna temple, Vadakkunatha, Trichur, Rama temple, Triprayar

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS*

Adhishthana : Plinth part, below the wall part, in a Southern temple context.

Alindra : The deliberately left perambulatory space between the double walls of the sanctum ; both the walls usually carrying elevational features on their respective exterior. It has a relationship to the thickness of the cella width.

Alpavimana : This implies, according to texts, a temple-model which has only one *tala* and one *hara*. There are representations of such at Mahabalipuram in Arjuna's penance *bas-relief*, as also at Penamaga, near Undavalli (Krishna District) of a similar kind.

Anarpita : *See arpita*

Ardhamandapa : The antechamber immediately adjoining the *garbhagriha* essentially forming the entrance framework for the main shrine ; known as *antarala* in the north especially in *sandhara* temples ; generally rectangular transeversely and leading immediately to the *mahamandapa* in the southern temple. In early forms,

*Includes some common terms not included in the text.

however, both in the North and in the South, the temple unit contains only cella and *ardhamandapa* which in such cases would be called the *mukhamandapa*, or when very narrow, a *pragriva*.

Arpita : Signifies in a southern temple, the *hara* units over each *tala* and *prastara*, not of free-standing nature forming regular parapets for the *pardakshina* passage of successive *talas*, but rather applied to the next following *tala*. Its counterpart is *anarpita* which is generally an earlier form, indicating rudimentary provision for *pradakshina* at each *tala* level. The passage involved is actually the *alindra* of the southern architectonics.

Ayatsasra : Rectangular in plan.

Bhadra : Essentially means the cardinal opening or projection. In northern or southern temple plan it represents the cardinal *ratha*, and signifies a temple, open on all the four sides, when used as a *sarvatobhadra*. In South, such projection is also called *mukhabhadra*.

Bhitti : Represents the wall part of a temple and corresponds to *pada* of the southern usage, *jangha* of the northern usage ; is found in this form in the earliest northern texts.

Bhumi : Literally, a vertical division of the superstructure, but essentially employed in non-functional storeyed forms as in the *Nagara rekha sikhara*, where it roughly stands for each of the nodes of the vertical profiles, delimited by a *karnamalaka*.

Chchhanda : A term used in relation to other terms like *jati*, *vikalpa* and *abhasa* and generally meaning certain gradations of the superstructural units, and probably also divisible in the form of free-standing temples, fully relieved temples, partially relieved niche models, and painted specimens respectively.

Chaturasa : Square in plan, representing one of the three major fundamental architectural plans of temples; the other two being *ashtasra* (octagonal), and *vritta* (circular). There are also *ayatasra* or rectangular and *vrittayata* or apsidal forms ; the square essentially pertaining to the northern temple. *Ashtasra* (octagonal) plan relates to a *Dravida* temple in its pure form, but relates mainly to the form of its *sikhara* and *griva*.

Devakoshtha : Stands for the niches containing shrines of divinities in stipulated forms and directions, as enjoined in the texts.

Dravida : One of the three major divisions of temple styles often used in *Silpa* texts ; the other two being *Nagara* and *Vesara*. It is essentially restricted in texts to designate the octagonal diagnostic *sikhara* feature, but has considerably more component features, for identifying a temple as *Dravida* in a clinching way.

Dvara : Means gateway, and is divided into many forms in early texts, such as *dvarasala*, *dvarasabha*, etc., and contains the germs for latter day *gopuradvaras*. One of the earliest *dvaras* in south India will be seen at the Kailasanatha shrine at Kanchi and the Shore Temple, Mahabalipuram facing east.

Dvarapalas : These are the door keepers or *pratiharas* as known in northern usage and could sometimes be *dvarapalikas* as for Durga, corresponding to *pratiharis*. They are generally found on the door frame of the cella in Deccan and North where they are also accompanied by Ganga and Yamuna along side on their respective mounts, namely, the *makara* and the *kurma*. In the South, they are generally placed outside the main temple unit, be it *ardhamandapa* or *mahamandapa* in its most original layout and, as a result, serve to indicate the original limit of the temple, by their location. They wear *ayudhas* reflecting and personifying the Sivaite or Vaishnavite main deity.

Dvyasra : A term used apparently to denote a rectangle ending with an apse. It could thus be well called *vrittayata*, although the latter could equally mean the elliptical form. It is a prevalent view that *dvyasra* has become *'vesara'* in the terminological jargon.

Gavaksha : Pierced window-openings for ventilaiion and light.

Ghanadvara : This represents a large grill-window or a pilastered niche provided on the cardinal points of the main shrine on its outer walls. It implies essentially a false door. It is flanked on the [outside by two free-standing pillars. Such types are generally seen in the *Nagara prasadas* of the North and the Deccan.

Griva : The neck of the superstructure.

Hara : A string, literally, and connotes the string of the shrine miniatures that run over the parapet of each

tala (generally excluding the last, except in very early contexts) and comprising *kutas* at the corners, and *salas* in between. Sometimes *panjara* units are also displayed in the *hara*. See under *panjara*.

Harantara : The recession between *kuta* and *sala* in the southern context and the *bhadra, anuradha* and *karna* in the northern, where it is also called the *salilantara*, since it facilitates storm water drainage.

Jagati : See under *padma* : It is a recurrent from in southern temples at the base of the *adhisthana* above the *upana* and is plain vertical right angular ; is different from the *jagati* of the northern temples where it signifies a spacious structural terrace, upon which the main temple is erected.

Kalasa : The most important and topmost part of a temple structure showing a properly consecrated pot-form usually encased in copper metal. No temple is fit for or deemed as in active worship without its being in position.

Kapotabandha : An *adhishthana* form whose top member is a *kapota* ; unlike that of *padabandha* and *pratibandha*, which have a *pattika*. A *kapotabandha* further should normally have a *vritta-kumuda*, but occasionally *tripatta* ; typical of Chalukyan region and used early only once in the south, in Dharmaraja Ratha.

Karna : Singifies the corner unit of the plinth and wall carrying its own superstructural elements in harmony with the main temple style.

Kudyastambha : The pillars which additionally support a *pada* and are placed at regular intervals on the exterior of the wall over the plinth.

Kumuda : An important moulding of the *adhishthana*; see under *pattika*. It has two classes, the *vritta kumuda* and the *tripatta kumuda*, which are self-explanatory. In Chalukyan country, we have a multi-faceted *kumuda* also, in early usage, as at Aihole, Nagaral, etc.

Kuta : A '*sikhara*' unit in the southern style, which has a square plan and is basically capping an *alpavimana* or single storeyed unit, but stands for miniature or *kshudra alpavimana* part of the multistoreyed temple. In these, it occupies the corner (*karnakuta*) of the parapet, above the entablatures, of each storey or *tala*.

Lalatabimba : This represents a small ritual carved tablet located in the centre of the lintel of the cella door. It is popularly taken as a cognizance of the religious affiliation of the deity within, but could indeed be a merely auspicious common motif, employed, more on a regional pattern than anything else. The usual *lalatabimba devatas* are Gajalakshmi, Ganesa, Garudra, Lakulisa, Anantasayi, etc.

Linga : Originally meaning a mere symbol or a formal criterion having the same sense as *chinha*; later appropriated to Sivaite usage and taking the form of a vertical shaft of stone either plain or faceted. It is also relieved with figure work in the earliest instances. In such a case, it is called a *mukhalinga* and may have a single *mukha* or five *mukhas*. These

are mounted directly on the square bases and thus vertically support the originally iconic character of Siva turned into the symbolic pillar form subsequently.

Manasutra : The vertical plumb-line delimiting the projections of the *kapota* or cornice and essentially coalescing with the projection of the *upana* or the lowest of the plinth in southern temples, but not necessarily so, in the northern temples. In northern temples particularly in early medieval stages, the plinth flares out much wider off than the drip line of the cornice.

Manchabandha : An *adhishthana* type of the simplest kind in the form of a high *kantha* with an *upana* below and a *pattika* or *kapota* above. A very popular Chalukyan usage where it has a *kapota* top.

Mulabhera : The main deity, usually of stone (*sila*), brick and stucco (*sudha*) or in wood (*daru*) or in paint (*abhasa*), and both in iconic and aniconic forms.

Mukhapatti : Horse-Shoe shaped or trefoil barge-board of *sukanasa* or even smaller *nasikas*. These are decorated in the former with side cusps bearing *nagas* and with rosette series along the border, representing nail heads.

Nagara : Generally taken to mean 'northern' temples owing to their sharp divergence from southern or *Dravida* ; stands for a square-sectioned temple, whose *sikhara* is of the *rekha* type surrounded by an *amalakasila*

sometimes. It is, rather obscurely, taken to represent any temple in early Tamil literature.

Nasika : Representing small dormer windows on *kapotas*, *prastaras* and *sikhara* roofs ; shaped essentially in the form of the original Buddhist *chaitya* dormer. Owing to their peculiar projection forward, they are known as such. In the most significant and larger-sized projection at the base of the *sikhara* on the main direction of orientation of the temple, or all the four cardinal directions, they are called *suknasa* or *mahanasika* respectively.

Nirandhara : As opposed to *sandhara*, this has a single wall for its main temple cella and the *pradakshina* is to be made around it on the open court or terrace. Generally a characteristic of southern temples.

Pada : Wall part, above the *adhishthana* or plinth and below the cornice, in southern context.

Padabandha : One of the *adhishthana* types of early southern temples, differing from the other important form, namely, *pratibandha* in two features, namely, having a *vritta kumuda* and often not having a *prati*.

Padma : Standing for the *cyma recta* of western usage and usually found in the northern or Deccani usage and in the later southern temples. In the earlier ones its places is assumed by a plain *jagati* or rectangular high moulding.

Panjara : Meaning a cage and representing a *nasika* supported

by pilastered framework at the lower levels of the *tala* and generally located in the recessions or the *harantara* or *salilantara* portions of the wall face. Where it is having a regular *sikhara* miniature, as sometimes in evolved pre-medieval Deccan usage, it is called *sikhara panjara*. Where it has at the base of the pilaster a large *kumbha* and overflowing foliage on the top, as in the medieval southern usage, it is called a *kumbha panjara*, and so on.

Parivaradevata : A subsidiary deity, which is subordinate to and attendant upon the main deity or *mulabhera* of a temple, in a given sectarián context.

Pattika : Heavy oblong-sectioned topmost moulding of the *adhisthana* in the southern temples, the other parts being *kantha, kumuda, padma* or *jagati* and *upana*. It projects over the *kantha*. In Tamil texts called '*agrapattiyal*'.

Pindi or Griha-pindi : The coping slab, single usually, that seals the superstructure below the *griva* level ; also stands for the wall immediately surrounding the main deity in the cella.

Pindika : This is essentially the support or platform or pedestal upon which either the *linga* or the image is placed. In the former case, it could be called a *pitha* where it rises fairly high ; and where it is kept very low—almost close to the floor—and often in a single slab, it may be called *pindika*.

Pragriva : Represents an incipient *mukhamandapa* or *antarala* terminating the temple unit, the only other part being the cella. Not used in the South.

Prakara : The wall erected around the main temple unit, leaving open space around for perambulation of the deity as well as the devotee. It is intended as a measure of protection as mentioned in the texts and employed mainly in the South.

Pranala : This signifies the provision architecturally made for discharge of *abhisheka* water from within the *garbhagriha* to the *prakara*, both for drainage as well as for ritual utilisation by the devotees. The earliest temples in the South upto the time of the early Cholas generally do not have *pranala* projections. In these instances it is just a water channel (where found) essentially cut on the top most member of the *adhishthana*. In the Deccan, however, there is a mixed usage of *pranalas* as well as plain, slab-cut water channels or *nalas*, running at the level of the inner *sandhara prasada* and provided with a reception opening within the cella. The *pranalas* according to text should be cut in the form of *simhavaktra* (lion face) and should be ridden over by *nandi* or *ganas*. The terminal is either in the form of a *makara* or *vyala* or an elephant trunk in the evolved cases. The The *pranala* is essentially different from *varimarga* or *ambumarga*.

Prasada : A term generally employed to signify place in civic architecture in early times, but coming to mean temples subsequently, of the northern type more commonly, as a *nagara prasada*. The southern usage prefers the word *vimana* although *prasada* is used.

Prastara : Entablature, namely, the parts above the *pada* of wall part and below the *griva* or the neck part in the southern context.

Prati : The topmost course, cut or placed on the *pattika* or *kapota*, as the case may be, of the *adhishtana* ; signifies the level of the *garbhagriha* floor and is a basic level for computation of elevation portions. It is from this word that the Tamil word *padi* for step is derived.

Pratibandha : An *adhishthana* type of the southern temples generally having a *tripatta kumuda* and a bold *prati*; usually older in provenance than the *padabandha* type.

Ratha : Graduated projections of a temple plan in the northern usage, where it could be *triratha*, *pancharatha* or *saptaratha* according to the evolution of the style. Each of the projections in such cases is also called *rathaka*.

Sala : Similar in import and usage to *kuta* and is found in multistoreyed shrines along with the *kuta* and alternatingly. It always occurs in the middle section in such cases, and never on the corners for the obvious reason of its being rectangular in plan.

Salilantara : Also known as *jalantara* (northern term), it largely stands for the *harantara* recess of the southern usage. Its purpose is for the drainage of water from the superstructure - roof through *nalas*, kept

above the cornice in this recess, making them unobtrusive.

Samatala : A *vitana* or ceiling type of a northern temple *mandapa* of almost level horizontal ceiling design.

Sandhara : A shrine which has a closed perambulatory circuit between the inner *garbhagriha* wall and the surrounding exterior wall. Essentially a feature associated with northern temples but rarely and not regularly found in the southern types.

Sikhara : In the southern style denotes only the topmost major component of the temple elevation, above the *griva* or neck and below the *stupi*. In the northern usage, it stands, for the whole of the superstructure above the cornice level.

Stupi : The topmost ritual part of a temple elevation. Includes generally the *kalasa* and the finial proper.

Sukanasa : Also called *mahanasika*. This shows the integral projection of the basal part of the superstructure forming the roof of the *antarala* (or *ardhamandapa*). It is of two varieties, depending upon whether the structure is a *nagara prasada* or a southern *vimana*. In the former, it is in the form of the mammoth trefoil *nasika* complete with the *mukhapatti*, *saktidhvaja* and *simhalalata*. In the southern, it takes essentially the form of a front-on *sala*, reared upon a *pada*. The *sukanasas* are practically unknown in the temples south of Andhradesa, but are a diagnostic feature of the Chalukyan genere.

Tala : Storey and generally involving a plinth, a *pada*, *prastara*, a *griva*, over which in a series occurs a *sikhara*, as in the southern style.

Upana : The lowest and plain moulding of the *adhishthana* forming a basal preparational of the temple plinth.

Upapitha : The basal additional and optional functional part of the plinth below the *adhishthana* proper in a southern temple ; often consists of a simple *manchabandha ;* generally employed only in evolved temples or in special contexts, where the shrine does not have sufficient elevated position.

Utsavabhera : The subsidiary to the image in the sanctum, and the main ritual image subjected to movement and *abhisheka* during festivals, and which is usually made of bronze and prevalent mainly in south India. It is placed either in front of the *mulabhera* in the sanctum, or in the *mahamandapa* on a protable *mancha* or table.

Valabhi : This is the zone located under the cornice known as the *kapota*. It is essentially an overriding course connecting the *uttara* with the *prastara* and tying the cornice (*kapota*) as a cantilever. It is usually decorated either with a row of *bhutas* or *ganas* in which case it is called a *bhutavari* ; or it is embellished with *hamsa* or geese. Usually in evolved contexts the *valabhi* is either having a simple *padmamala* motif or is left plain with mild curvature. Rarely, it is also of the bevel type. Etymologically, the *valabhi* ; would represent turret roof and it is probably in this context that this term is employed in the northern texts like *Vishnudharmottara*.

Varimarga : This is a channel provided partially within the *grabhagriha* and projecting into the thickness of the wall meeting the *pranala* for the discharge of *abhisheka* water. Early temples show essentially a *varimarga*, but no specific *pranala*. By reference to a ban on the cutting of the top moulding of *adhishtana* for a *varimarga*, the texts imply their provenance earlier. Early Pallava temples have, one and all of them, only *varimargas* cut on the plinth top. In the southern tradition during the circumambulation of the cella either in *sandhara* types or in open *prakara* type a *varimarga*, is crossed to reach the front of the temple. In the evolved northern tradition, however, the *varimargas* particularly in Siva shrines is not to be crossed, but the devotee is to retrace his step backwards to the nandi *mandapa*. Usages as well as textual references uphold this.

Vedi : Represents a parapetting mainly divided into a series of pilasters and intended to provide an outer walling over the plinth. In the North, it additionally serves the purpose of having a *kakshasana* and a *chatushi* borne over dwarf pillars forming open balconies in the *sabhamandapa* of the temples.

Vesara : Notwithstanding the differences about its suggested connotation and covering the circular cross-section also, the term probably stands for apsidal structures of *gajaprishthakriti* in elevation and having a *chaitya* pent-house front for its superstructure, the area of its largest and prime incidence is the zone between the Narmada and the Krishna rivers.

Vimana : The full minimal shrine unit, covering from plinth to the spire (*upanadi stupi paryantam*). The term is

used mainly to refer to a *Dravida* or southern temple type, as different from the world *prasada*, which is used in the northern context. (See under *prasada*). It is used only in religious and never in a secular context.

Vimana Devatas : Figures of divinities placed in *koshthas* on the cardinal points and sometimes on the *vedika* also on the superstructure of the *vimana* at successive *talas*. The texts prescribe a specific *vyuha* for such *vimana-devatas*, appurtenant to Saiva or Vaishnava usage.

Vinyasasutra : An axial thread line indicating the norm of the plinth layout, the nature of the projections and recessions of the *madhyasala*, *karnakutas* and the *harantaras* at plinth level. The *vinyasasutra* line is generally dead straight in most of the southern temples, while in the northern temples the projections of the central (*bhadra*) part beyond the lateral parts in various *ratha* off-sets results in *ratha*-from becoming the norm.

Vitana : Literally a ceiling, either with free-standing pillars and canopy or part of the main structure or *mandapa* itself. *Vitanas* are generally severely plain in southern temples. They are found with a *navagraha* grid and a central panel of god-head, in the Deccan, as in Chalukyan temples. But in the north, particularly, in Gujarat, they are provided with infinite variations of patterns and are divisible into *samatala* and *nabhichchanda* types. These in turn have themselves many varieties of the *Kshipta* type or *Kshipto-kshipta* type, employing *gajatala* or cusped teeth or moulds and pendentives in the centre.

Vyalavari : Literally the griphon course, is a conventional structural blocking-course of rafters running both longitudinally and transversely and forming a framework, upon which the *pada* of each *tala* including its cornice is sustained. Usually in early specimens, it is embellished by showing the projecting rafter end as *vyalamukhas* only or as *vyalas* in lateral full aspects, the corresponding cross rafters which tie them being shown as having *makara* terminals. The *vyalavari* is usually but not always found below the top most member (*pattika* or *kapota*) of the *adhishthana* and correspondingly is the subsequent *talas* as the upper member of the *prastara* below the *vedi* and *griva* of the *hara*. In evolved architectural stages, the *vyalavari* tends to follow strictly the original-wood techniques, and displays only plain rafter ends and terminals.

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ERRATA

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5	33	lainty	laiety
11	25	salam	salem
13	10	it could be surmised that	this could be surmised of
14	23	elemants	elements
20	30	Ponnambalan chittrambalon	Ponnambalam chittrambalam
23	35	A territory	Ay territory
29	1	Bhadrabahu towards	Bhadrabahu or towards
41	26	*utsavabheres*	*utsavabheras*
44	37	Ichehha-sakti	Ichchha-sakti
55	11	Goupura	Gopura
67	22	mahachakinah	mahachchakrinah
100	28	Subrahamanva	Subrahmanya
108	last line	Tondaimaddalam	Tondaimandalam
112	38	Lingodhbhava	Lingodbhava
116	13	architecutre	architecture
136	33	out-manoevre	out-manoluvre

FIGURES

AND

PLATES

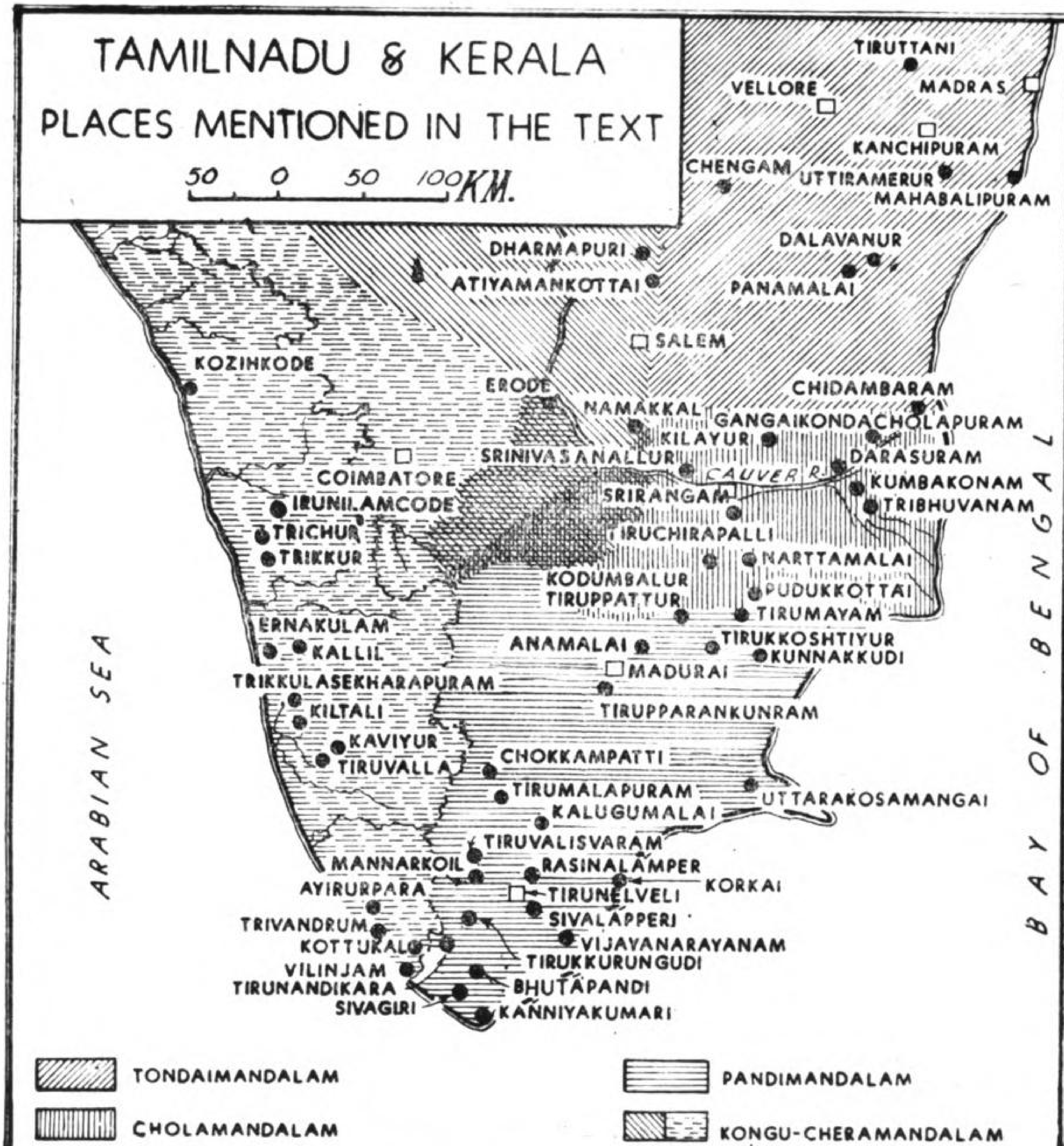

TAMILNADU & KERALA
PLACES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT
50 0 50 100 KM.
TIRUTTANI
VELLORE
MADRAS
KANCHIPURAM
CHENGAM
UTTIRAMERUR
MAHABALIPURAM
DALAVANUR
DHARMAPURI
ATIYAMANKOTTAI
PANAMALAI
SALEM
KOZIHKODE
ERODE
CHIDAMBARAM
NAMAKKAL
GANGAIKONDACHOLAPURAM
KILAYUR
SRINIVASANALLUR
CAUVERY R.
DARASURAM
COIMBATORE
KUMBAKONAM
IRUNILAMCODE
SRIRANGAM
TRIBHUVANAM
TRICHUR
TIRUCHIRAPALLI
TRIKKUR
NARTTAMALAI
KODUMBALUR
PUDUKKOTTAI
TIRUPPATTUR
TIRUMAYAM
ERNAKULAM
TIRUKKOSHTIYUR
ANAMALAI
KALLIL
KUNNAKKUDI
MADURAI
ARABIAN SEA
TRIKKULASEKHARAPURAM
KILTALI
TIRUPPARANKUNRAM
KAVIYUR
TIRUVALLA
CHOKKAMPATTI
BAY OF BENGAL
TIRUMALAPURAM
UTTARAKOSAMANGAI
KALUGUMALAI
TIRUVALISVARAM
MANNARKOIL
RASINALAMPER
AYIRURPARA
TIRUNELVELI
KORKAI
SIVALAPPERI
TRIVANDRUM
VIJAYANARAYANAM
KOTTUKAL
TIRUKKURUNGUDI
VILINJAM
BHUTAPANDI
TIRUNANDIKARA
SIVAGIRI
KANNIYAKUMARI
TONDAIMANDALAM
PANDIMANDALAM
CHOLAMANDALAM
KONGU-CHERAMANDALAM

Fig. 1

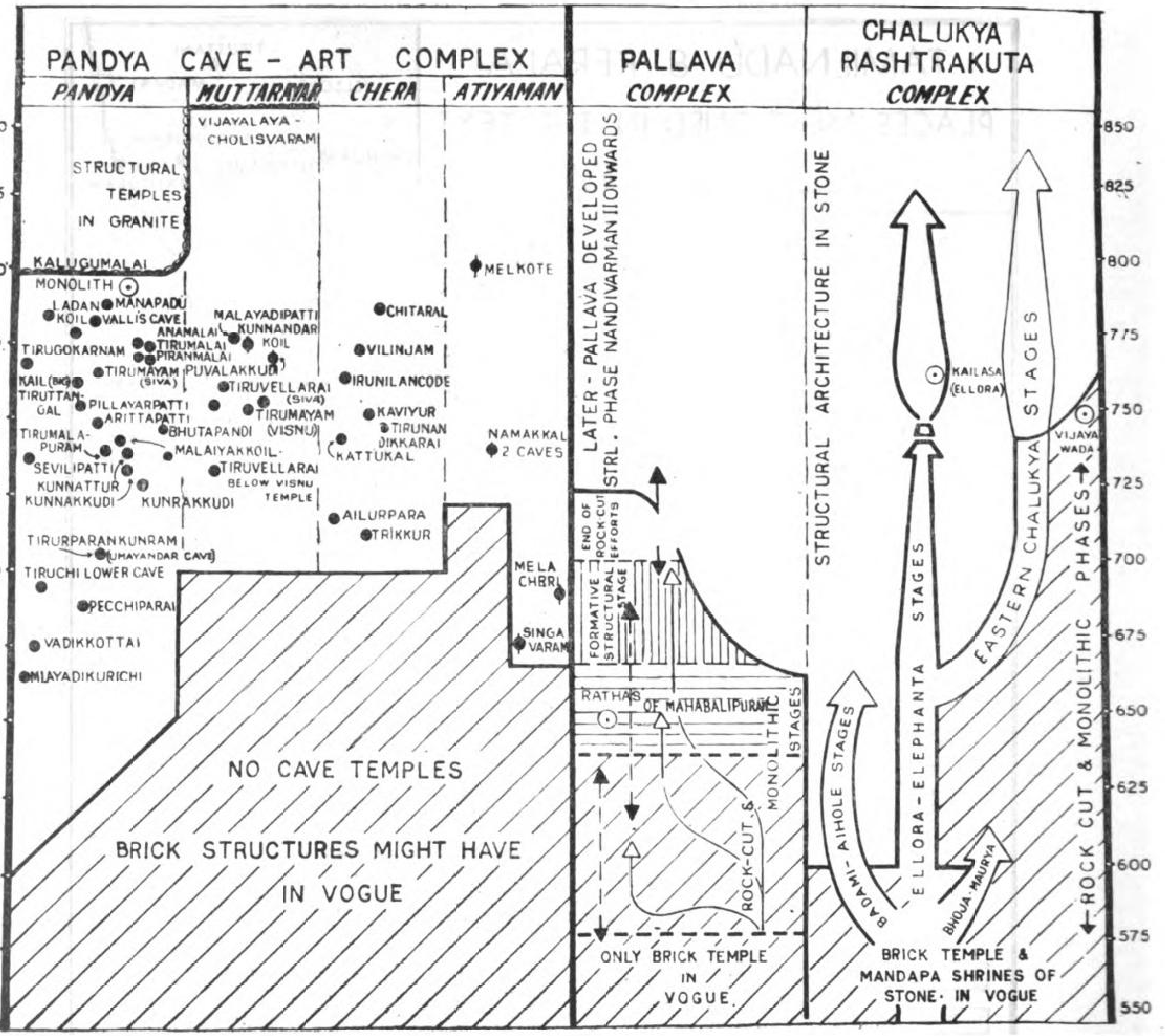

PANDYA CAVE - ART COMPLEX
PANDYA
MUTTARAYAR
CHERA
ATIYAMAN
PALLAVA COMPLEX
CHALUKYA RASHTRAKUTA COMPLEX
850
825
800
775
750
725
700
675
650
625
600
575
550
STRUCTURAL TEMPLES IN GRANITE
VIJAYALAYA - CHOLISVARAM
KALUGUMALAI
MONOLITH
LADAN KOIL
MANAPADU
VALLIS CAVE
MALAYADIPATTI
ANAMALAI
KUNNANDAR KOIL
TIRUMALAI
PIRANMALAI
TIRUGOKARNAM
TIRUMAYAM (SIVA)
PUVALAKKUDI
KAIL (BIG)
TIRUTTANGAL
TIRUVELLARAI (SIVA)
PILLAYARPATTI
ARITTAPATTI
TIRUMAYAM (VISNU)
BHUTAPANDI
TIRUMALAPURAM
MALAIYAKKOIL
SEVILIPATTI
TIRUVELLARAI BELOW VISNU TEMPLE
KUNNATTUR
KUNNAKKUDI
KUNRAKKUDI
CHITARAL
VILINJAM
IRUNILANCODE
KAVIYUR
TIRUNANDIKKARAI
KATTUKAL
AILURPARA
TRIKKUR
MELKOTE
NAMAKKAL 2 CAVES
TIRURPARANKUNRAM (UMAYANDAR CAVE)
TIRUCHI LOWER CAVE
PECCHIPARAI
VADIKKOTTAI
MALAYADIKURICHI
MELA CHERI
SINGAVARAM
NO CAVE TEMPLES
BRICK STRUCTURES MIGHT HAVE IN VOGUE
LATER - PALLAVA DEVELOPED STRL. PHASE NANDIVARMAN II ONWARDS
END OF ROCK-CUT EFFORTS
FORMATIVE STRUCTURAL STAGE
RATHAS OF MAHABALIPURAM
ROCK-CUT & MONOLITHIC STAGES
ONLY BRICK TEMPLE IN VOGUE
STRUCTURAL ARCHITECTURE IN STONE
KAILASA (ELLORA)
EASTERN CHALUKYA STAGES
VIJAYAWADA
ROCK CUT & MONOLITHIC PHASES
ELLORA - ELEPHANTA STAGES
BADAMI - AIHOLE STAGES
BHOJA - MAURYA
BRICK TEMPLE & MANDAPA SHRINES OF STONE IN VOGUE

Fig. 2

COMPARATIVE GENEALOGICAL CHART

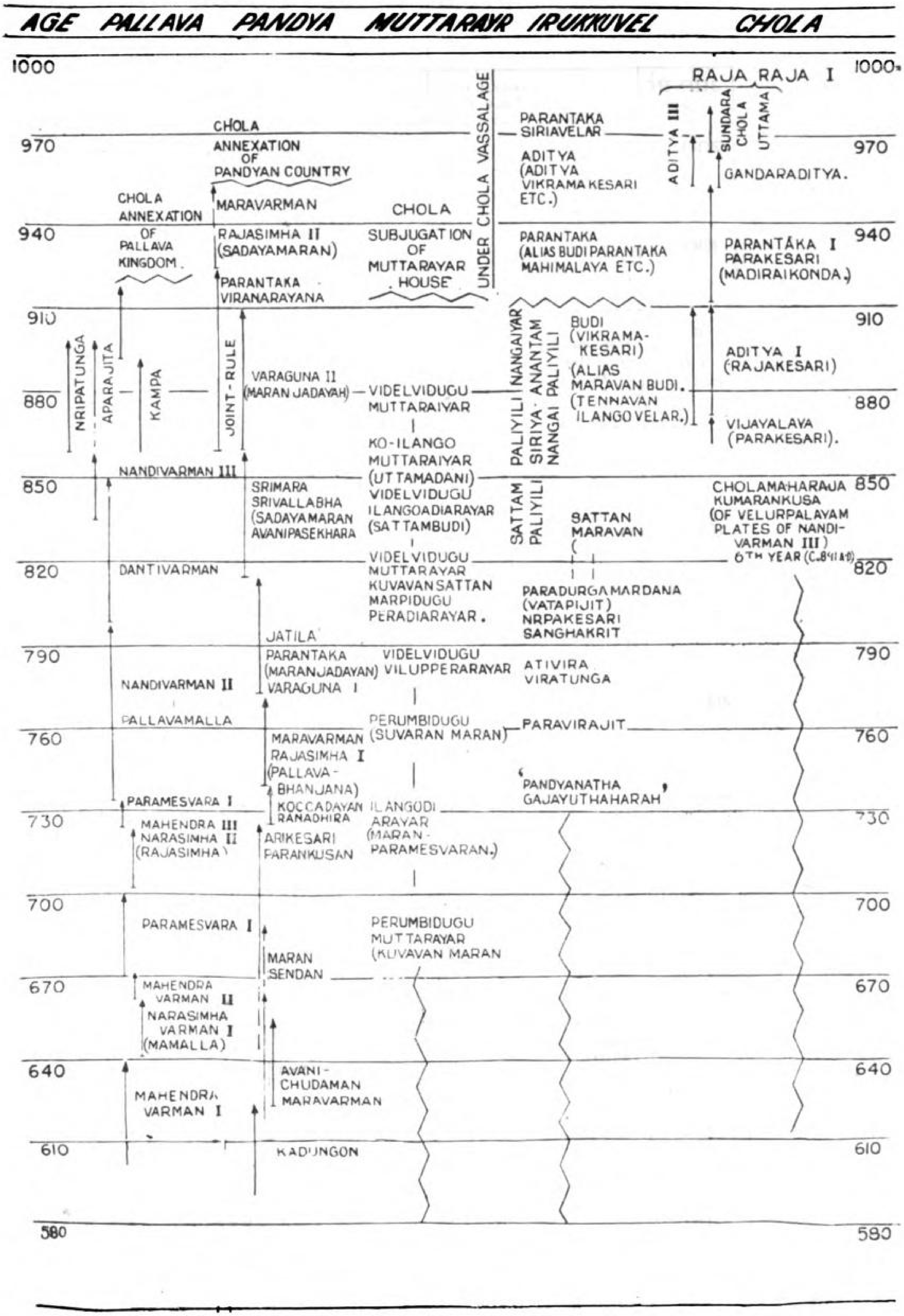


Fig. 3

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF EARLY TAMIL CULTURAL VESTIGES

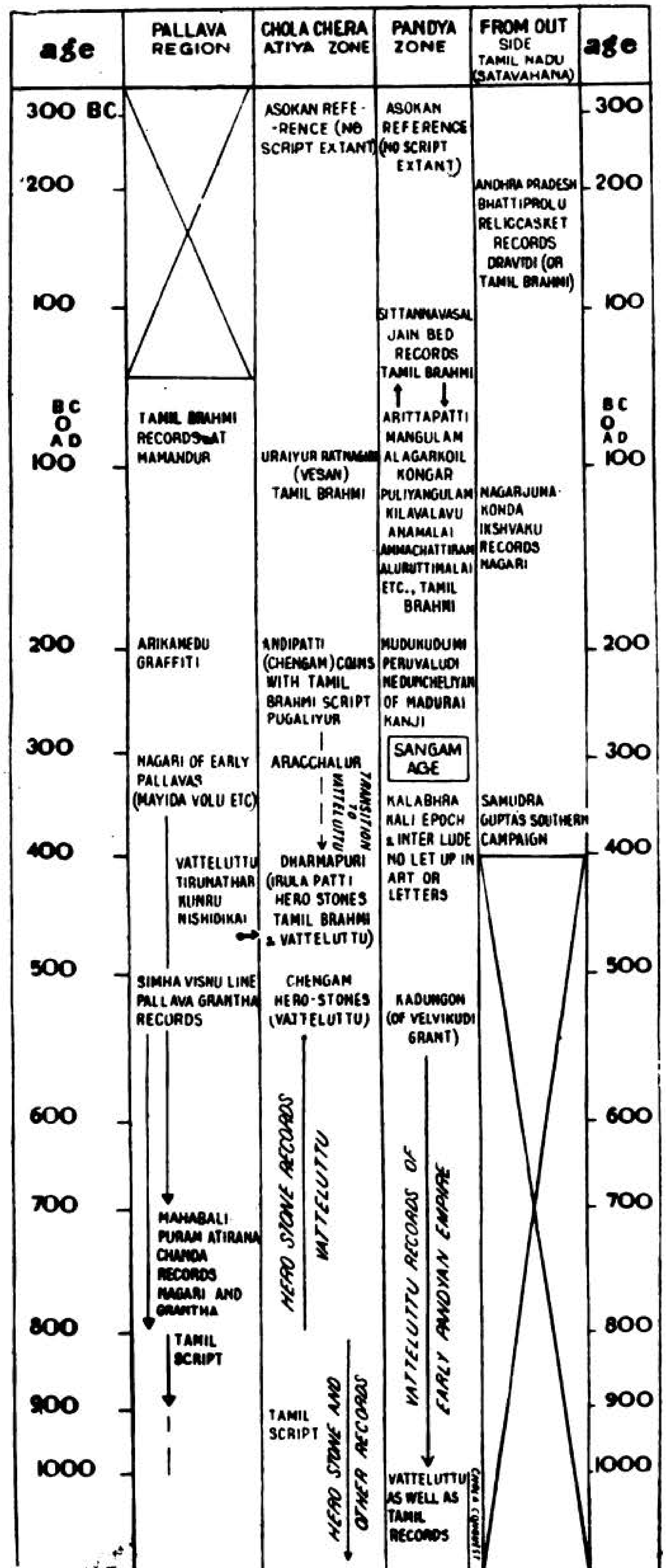


Fig. 4

DEITY POSITION IN *KOSHTA* NICHES, PARTICULARLY REAR WALL

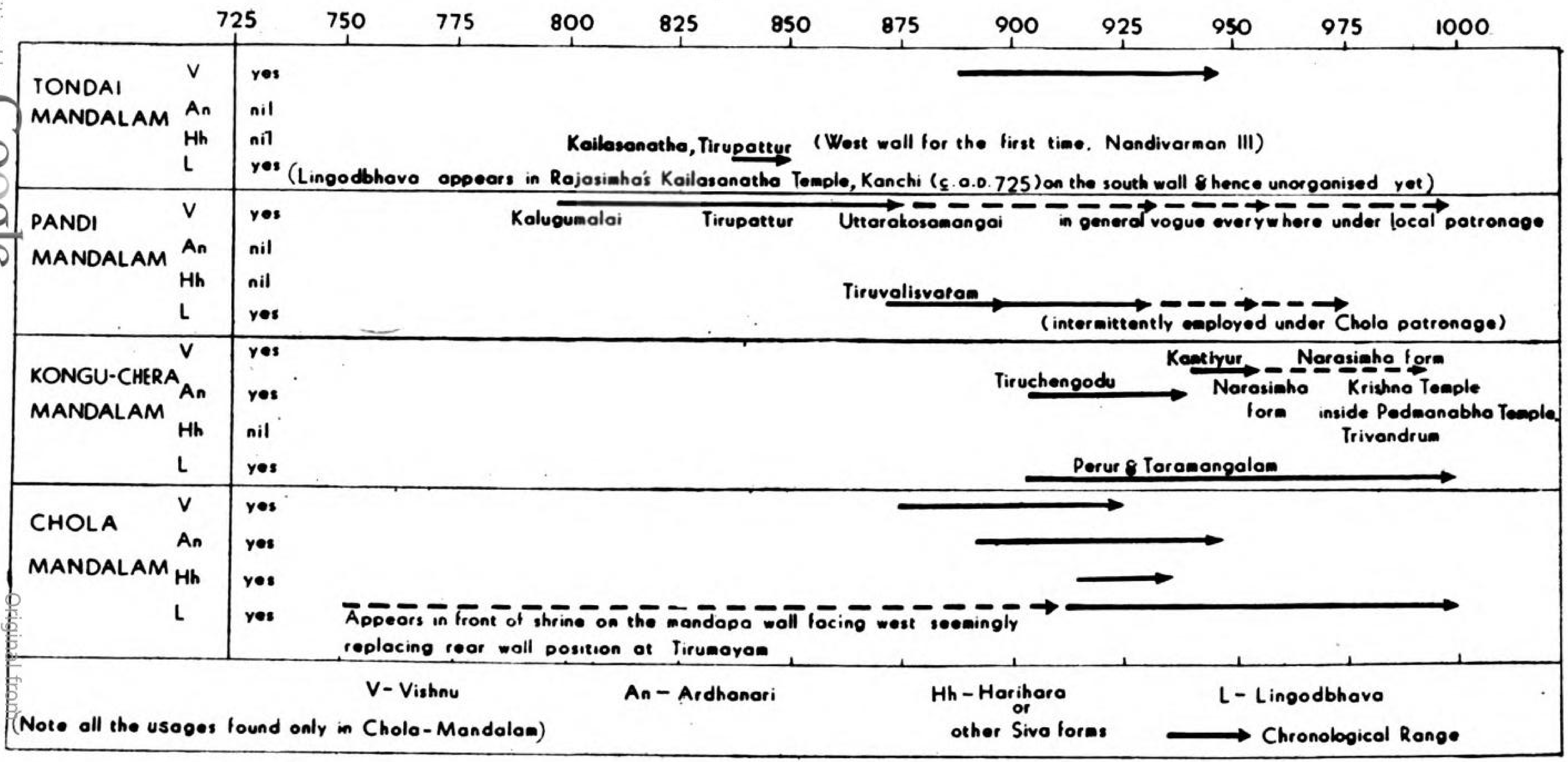


Fig. 5

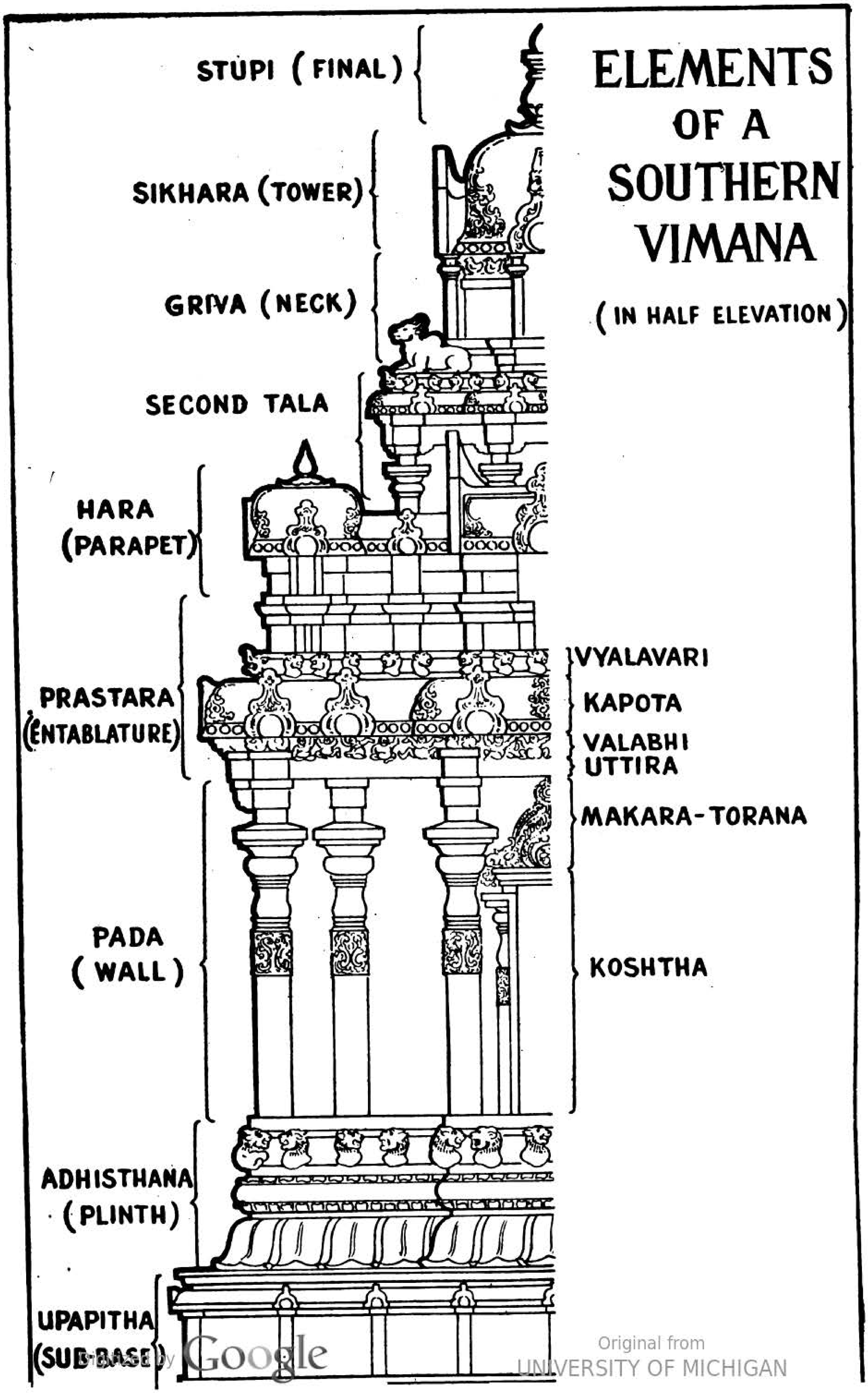

ELEMENTS OF A SOUTHERN VIMANA
(IN HALF ELEVATION)
STUPI (FINAL)
SIKHARA (TOWER)
GRIVA (NECK)
SECOND TALA
HARA (PARAPET)
PRASTARA (ENTABLATURE)
PADA (WALL)
ADHISTHANA (PLINTH)
UPAPITHA (SUB-BASE)
VYALAVARI
KAPOTA
VALABHI
UTTIRA
MAKARA-TORANA
KOSHTHA

Fig. 6

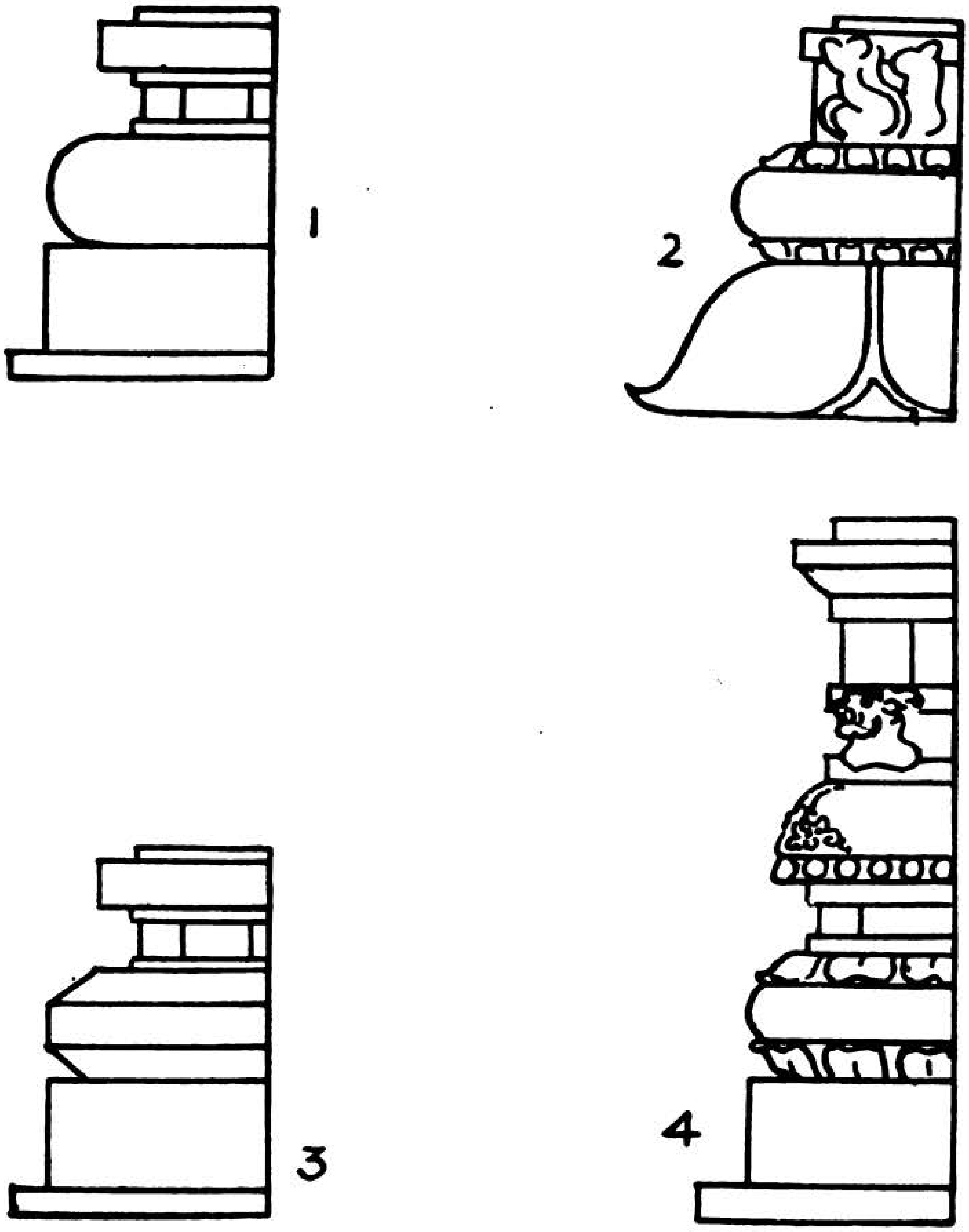


Fig. 7 Four main plinth types of the region.

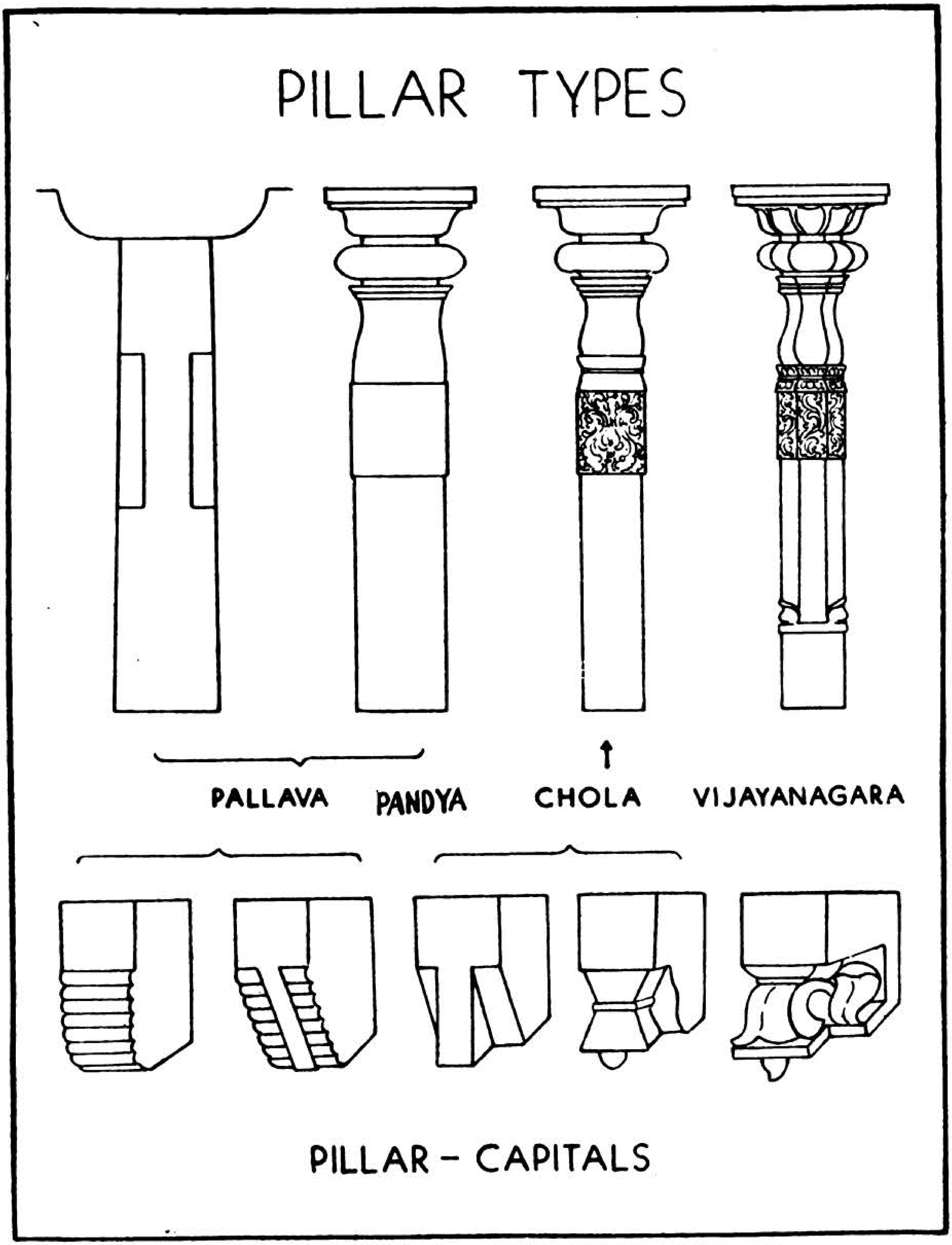

PILLAR TYPES
PALLAVA
PANDYA
CHOLA
VIJAYANAGARA
PILLAR – CAPITALS

Fig. 8

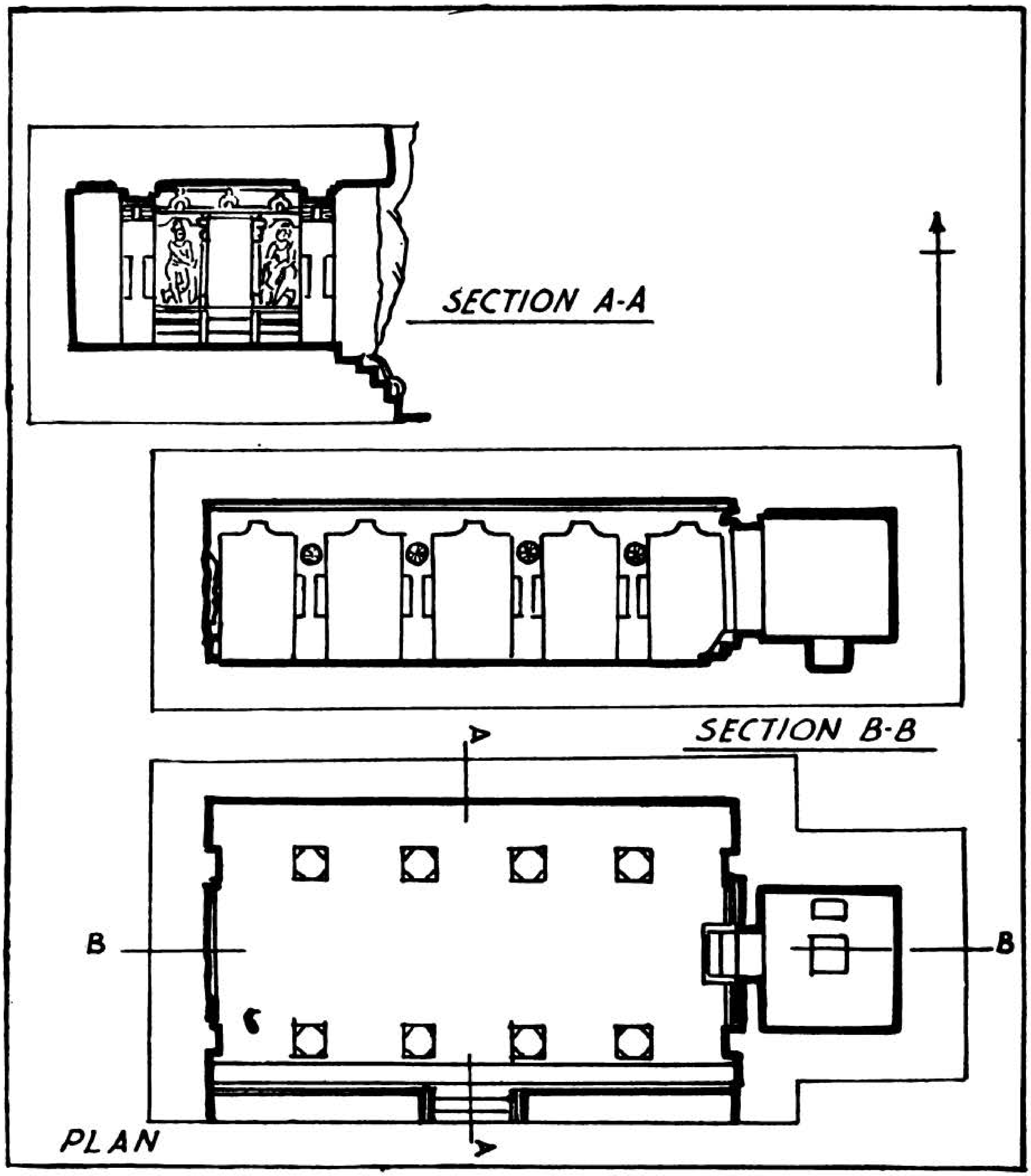


Fig. 9 Upper rock-cut cave, Tiruchchirappalli, Pallava.

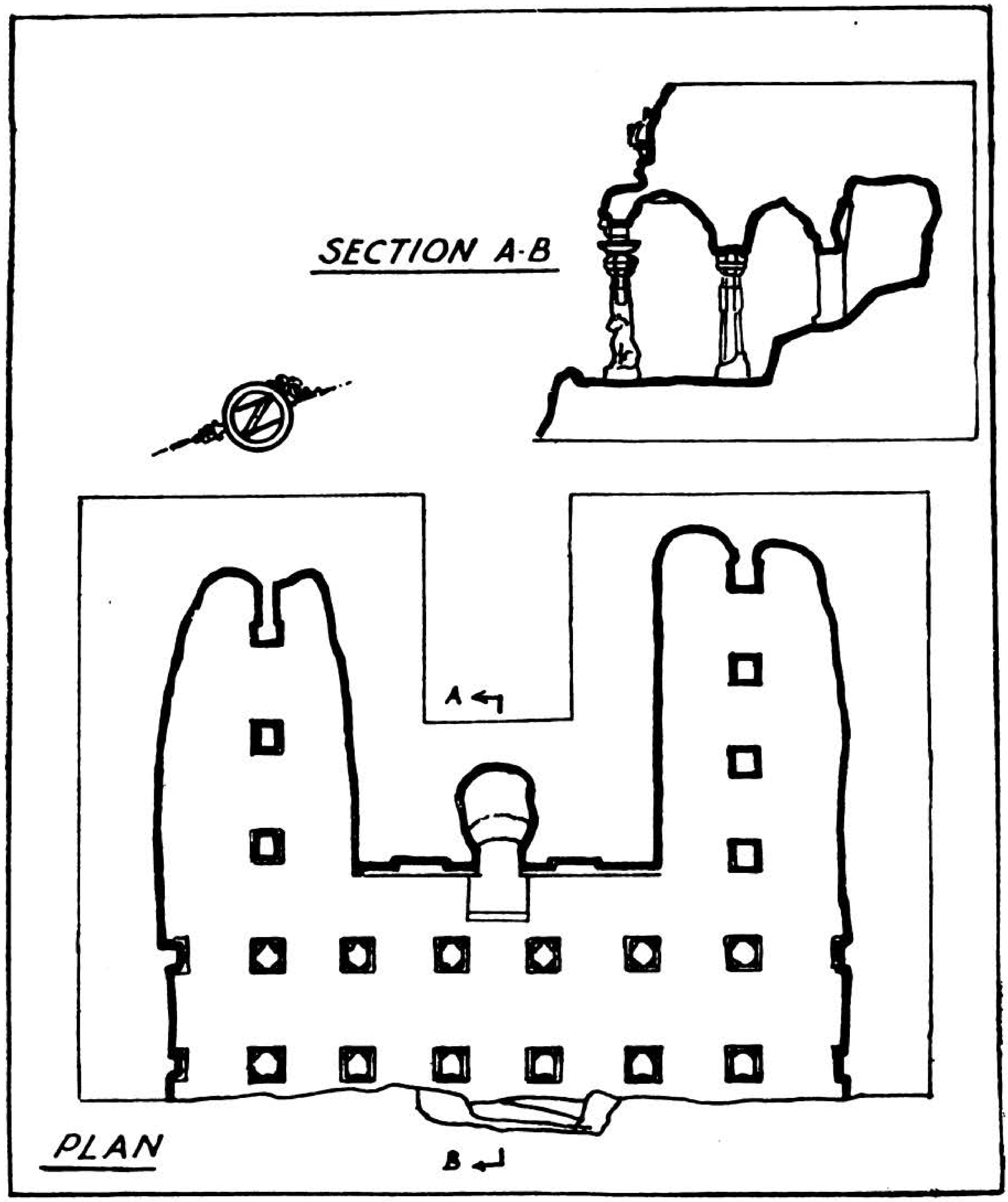


Fig. 10 Unfinished cave-temple, Pancha Pandavamandapam, Mahabalipuram.

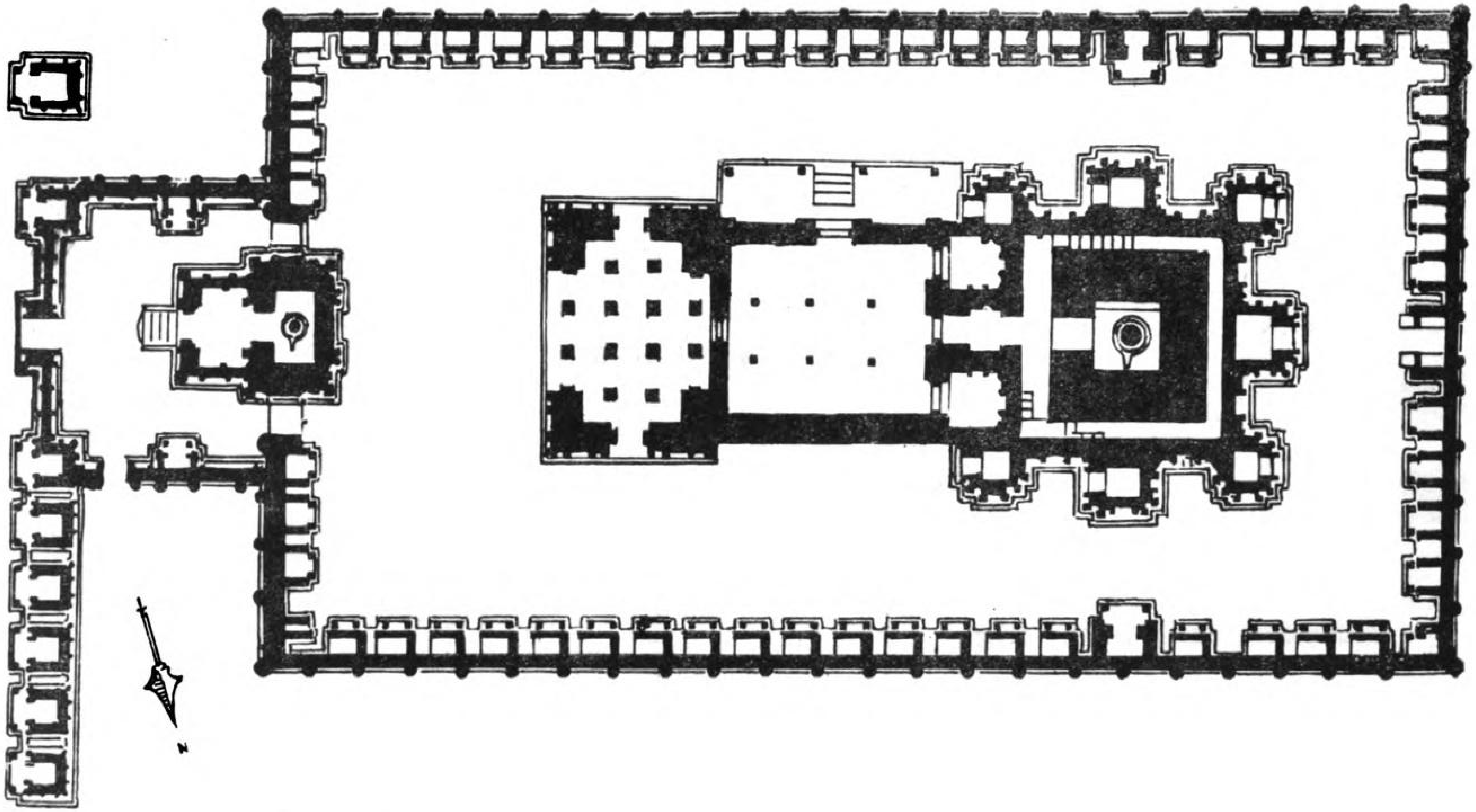


Fig. 11 Plan of Kailasanatha temple, Kanchipuram.

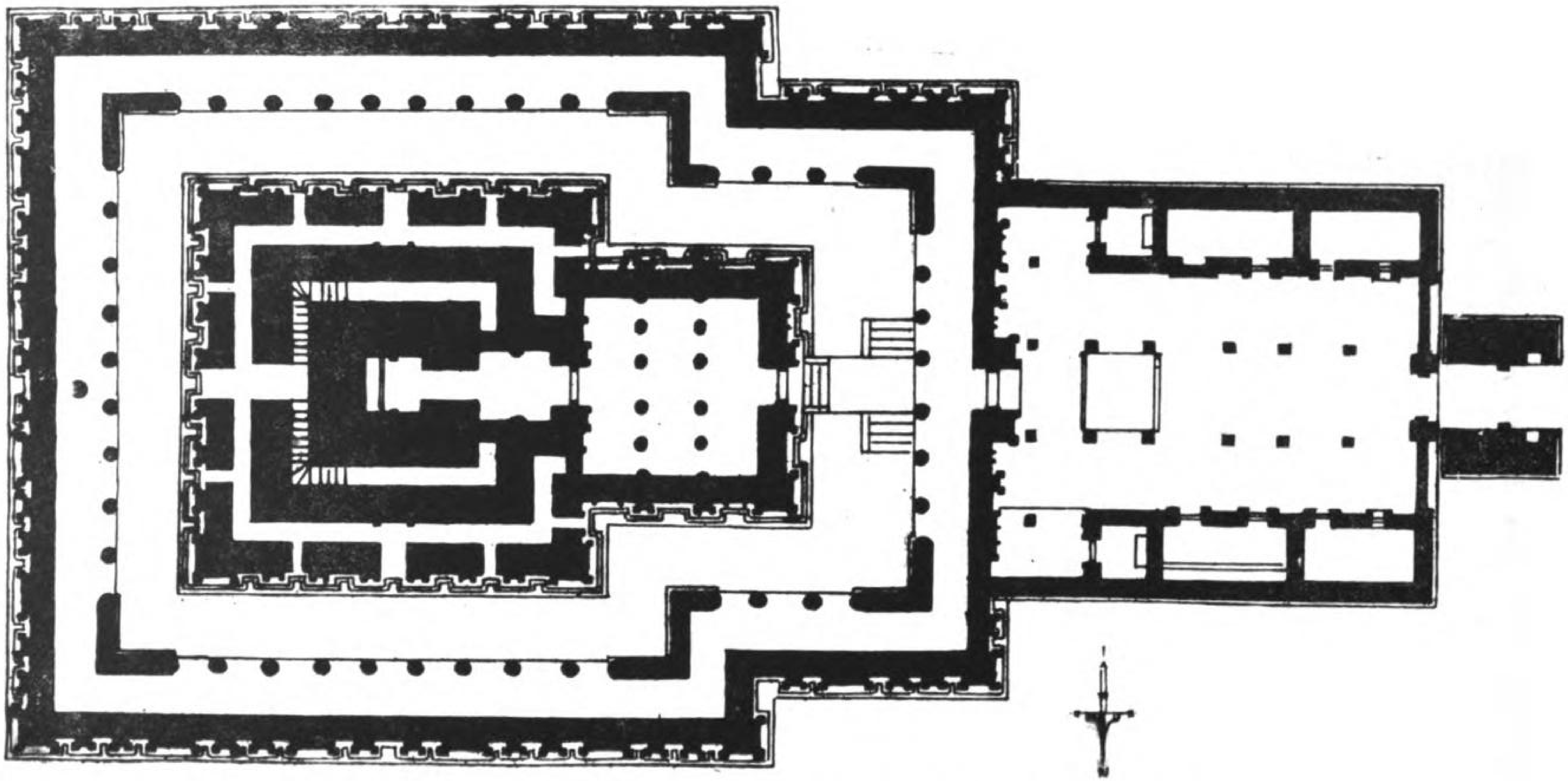


Fig. 12 Plan of Vaikunthaperumal temple, Kanchipuram.

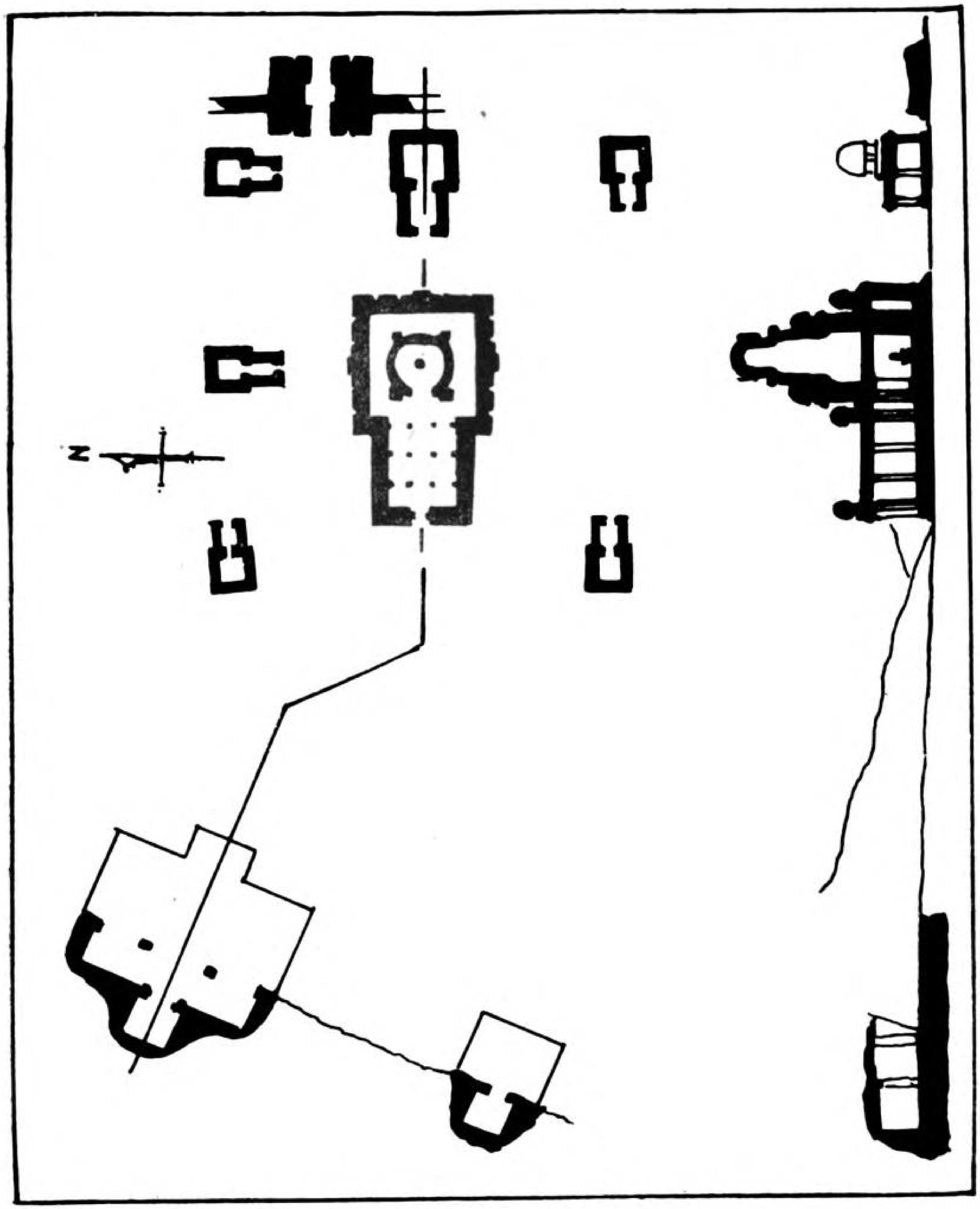


Fig. 13 Layout plan of the cave and structural temples, Narttamalai hill.

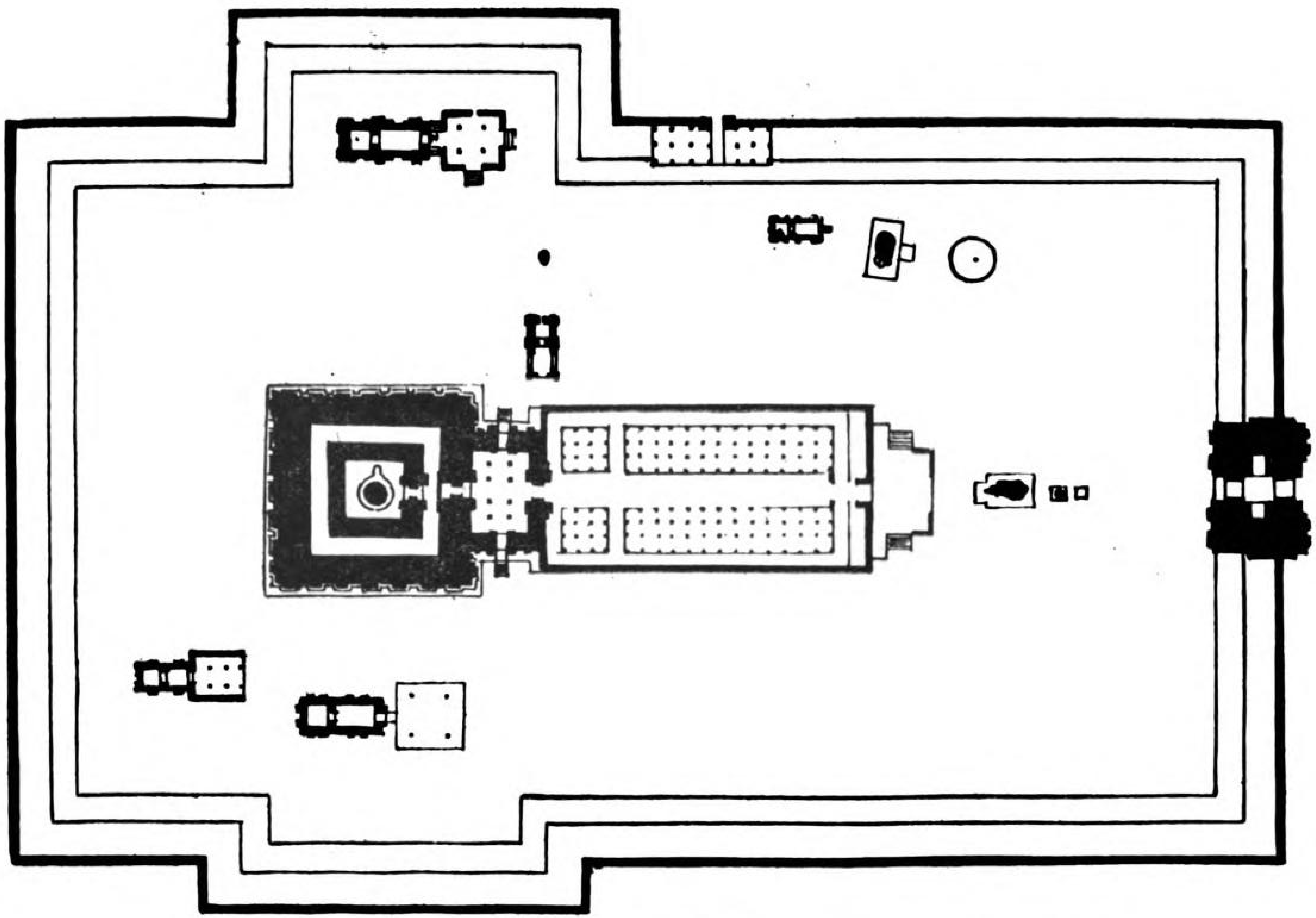


Fig. 14 Plan of Brihadisvara temple, Ganjaikondacholapuram.

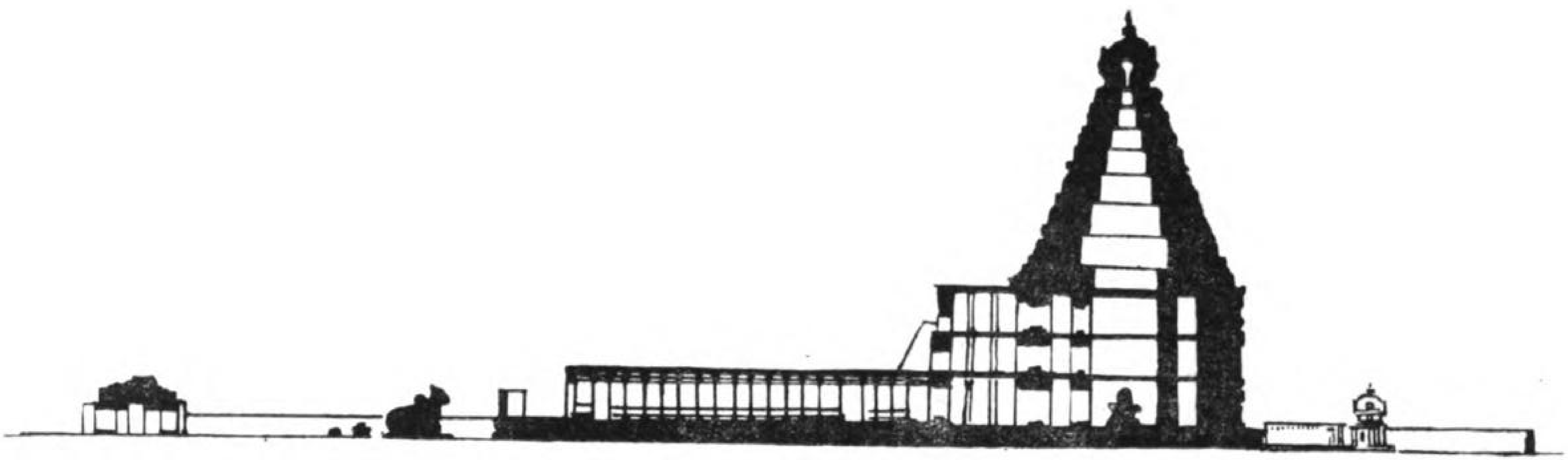


Fig. 15 Section of Brihadisvara temple, Ganjaikondacholapuram.

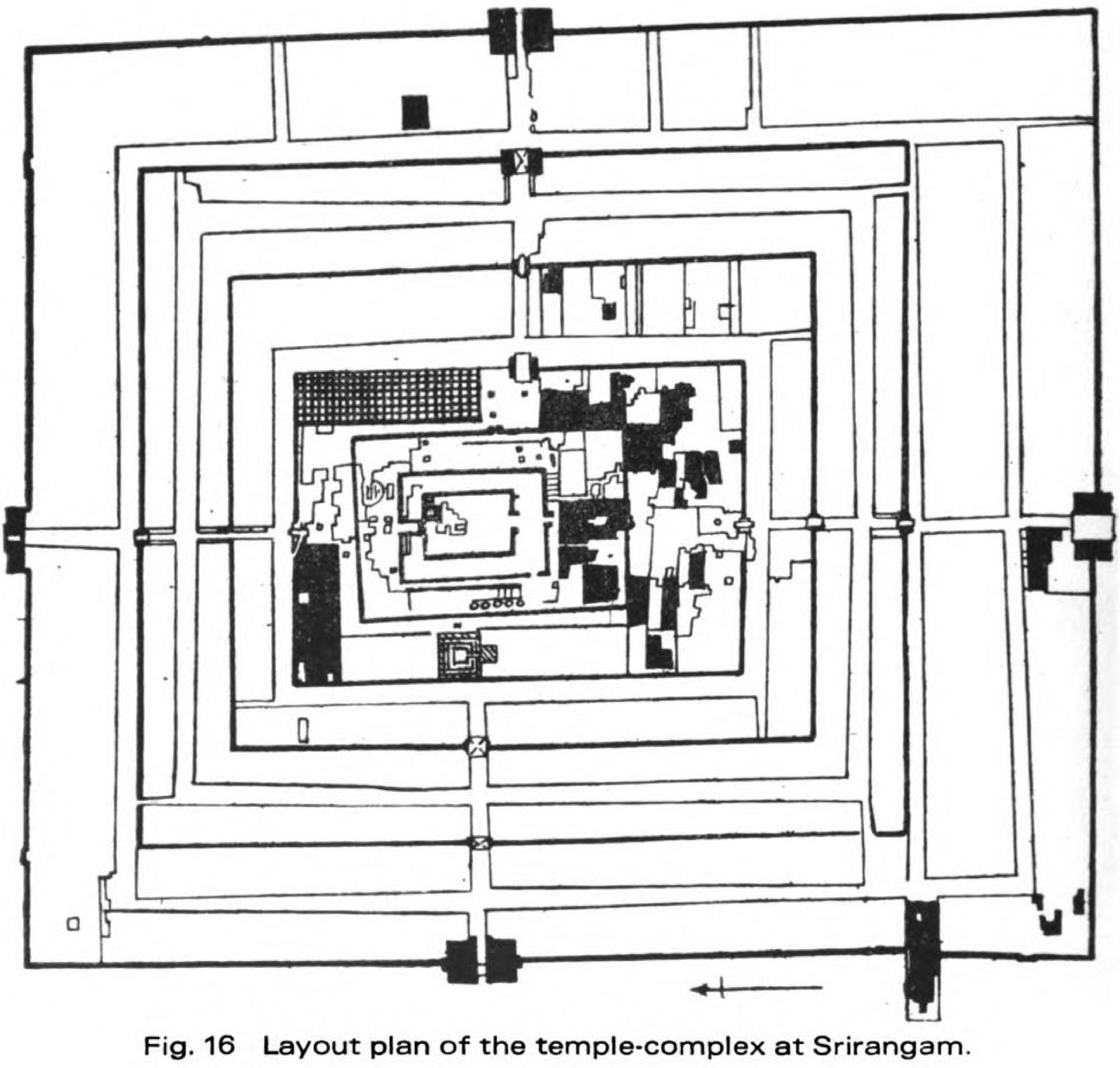


Fig. 16 Layout plan of the temple-complex at Srirangam.

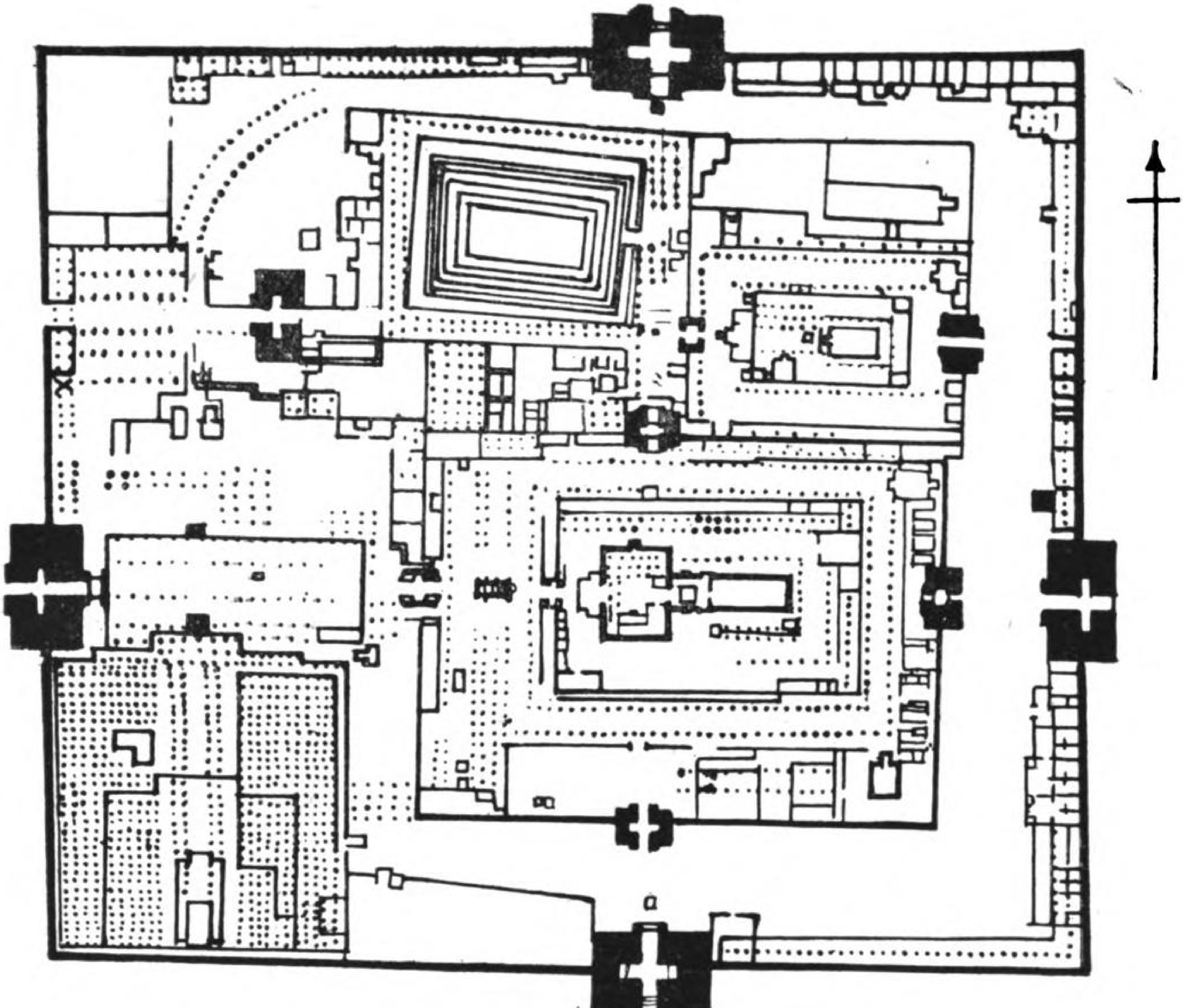


Fig. 17 Layout plan of the temple-complex at Madurai.

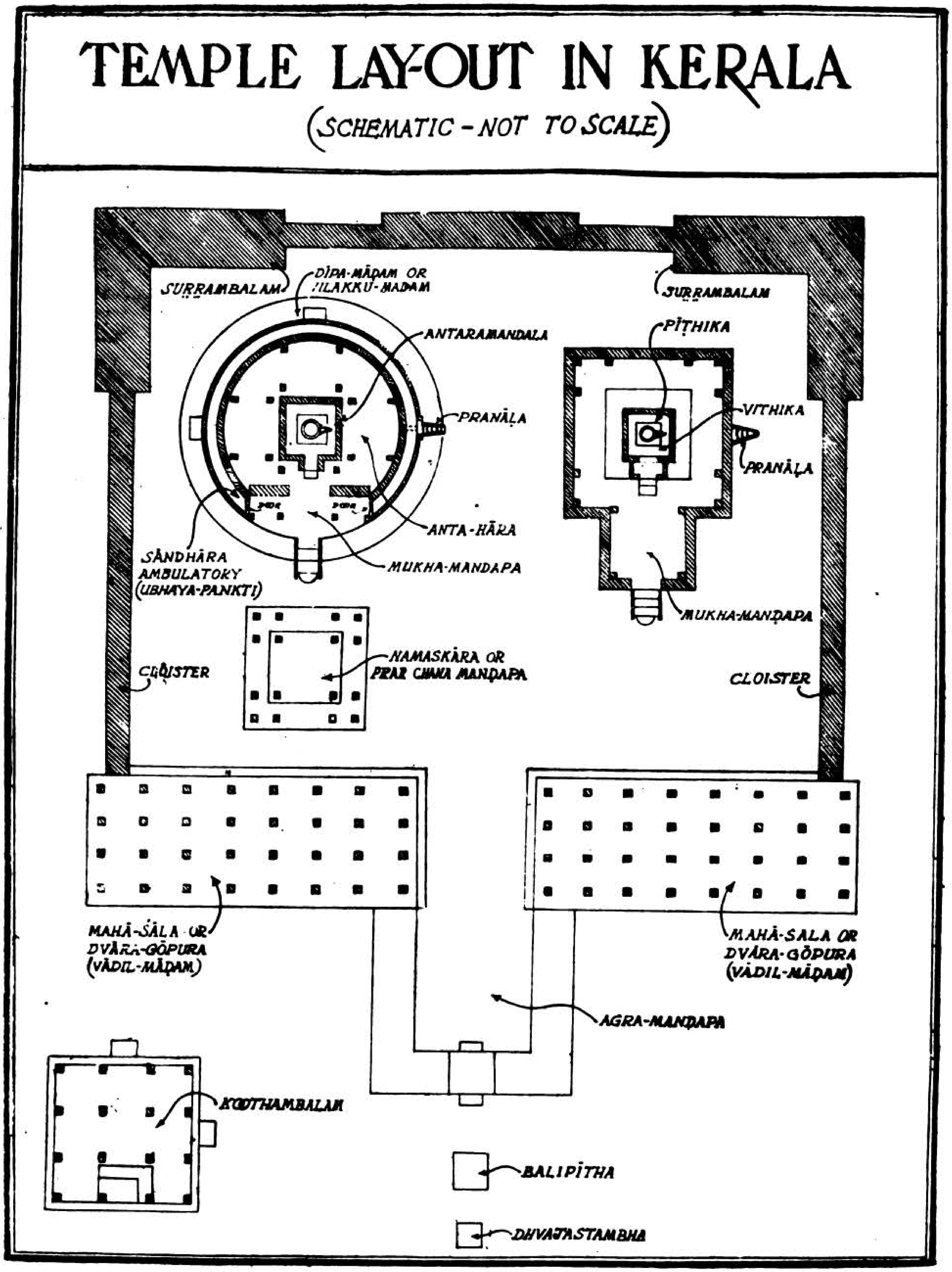
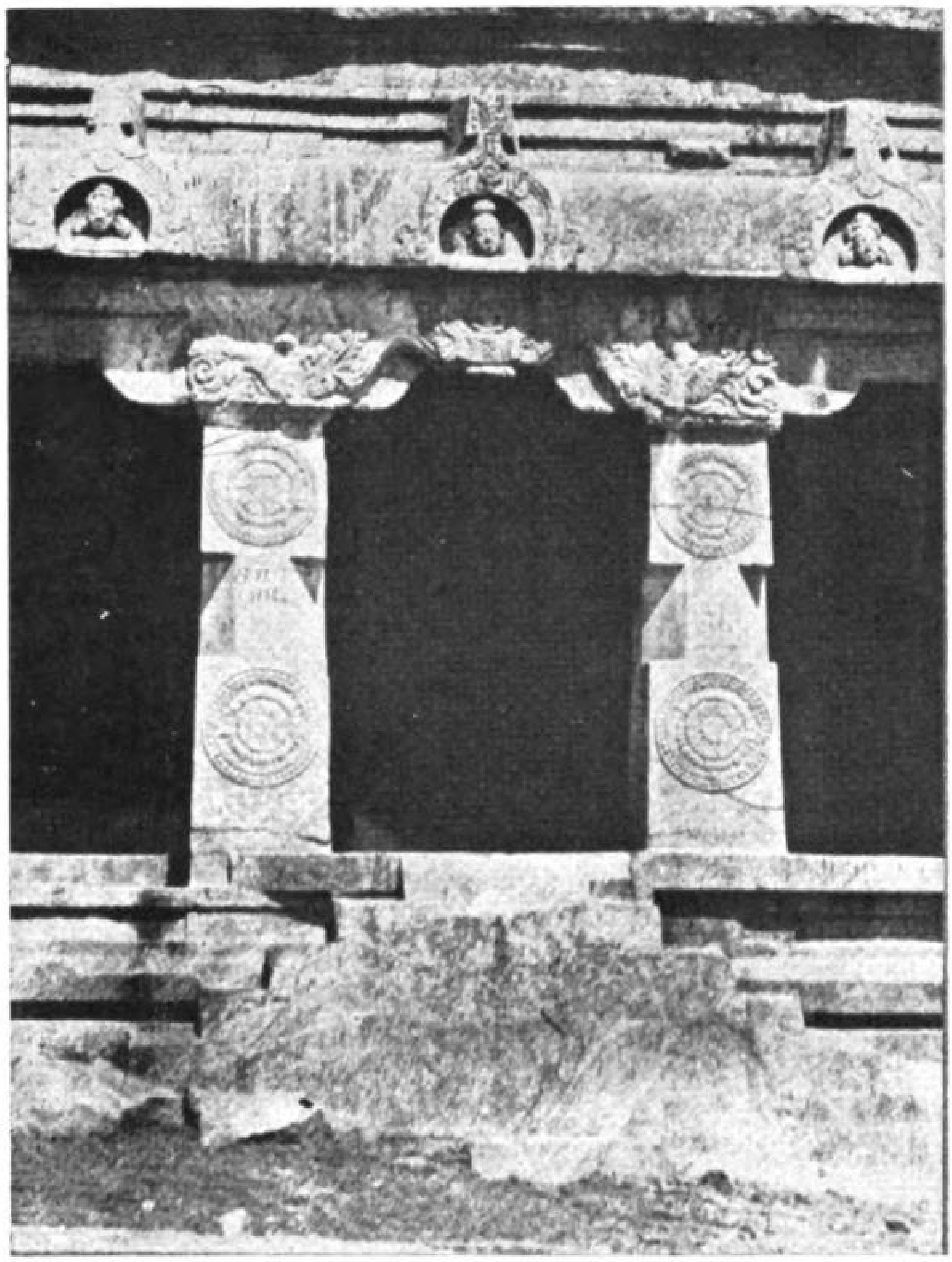


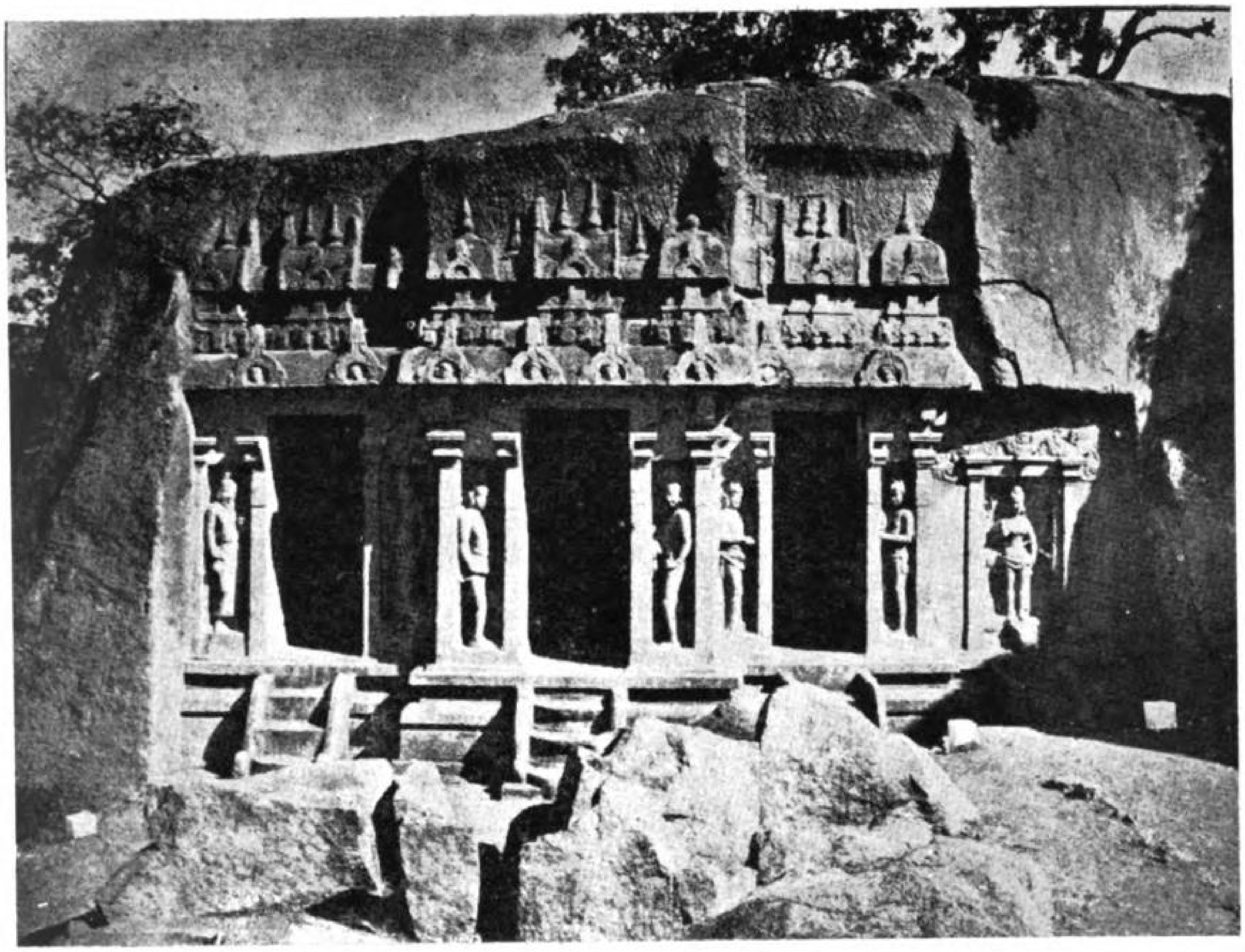
Fig. 18 The Pancha-*prakara* layout scheme of a general east-facing Kerala temple-complex.



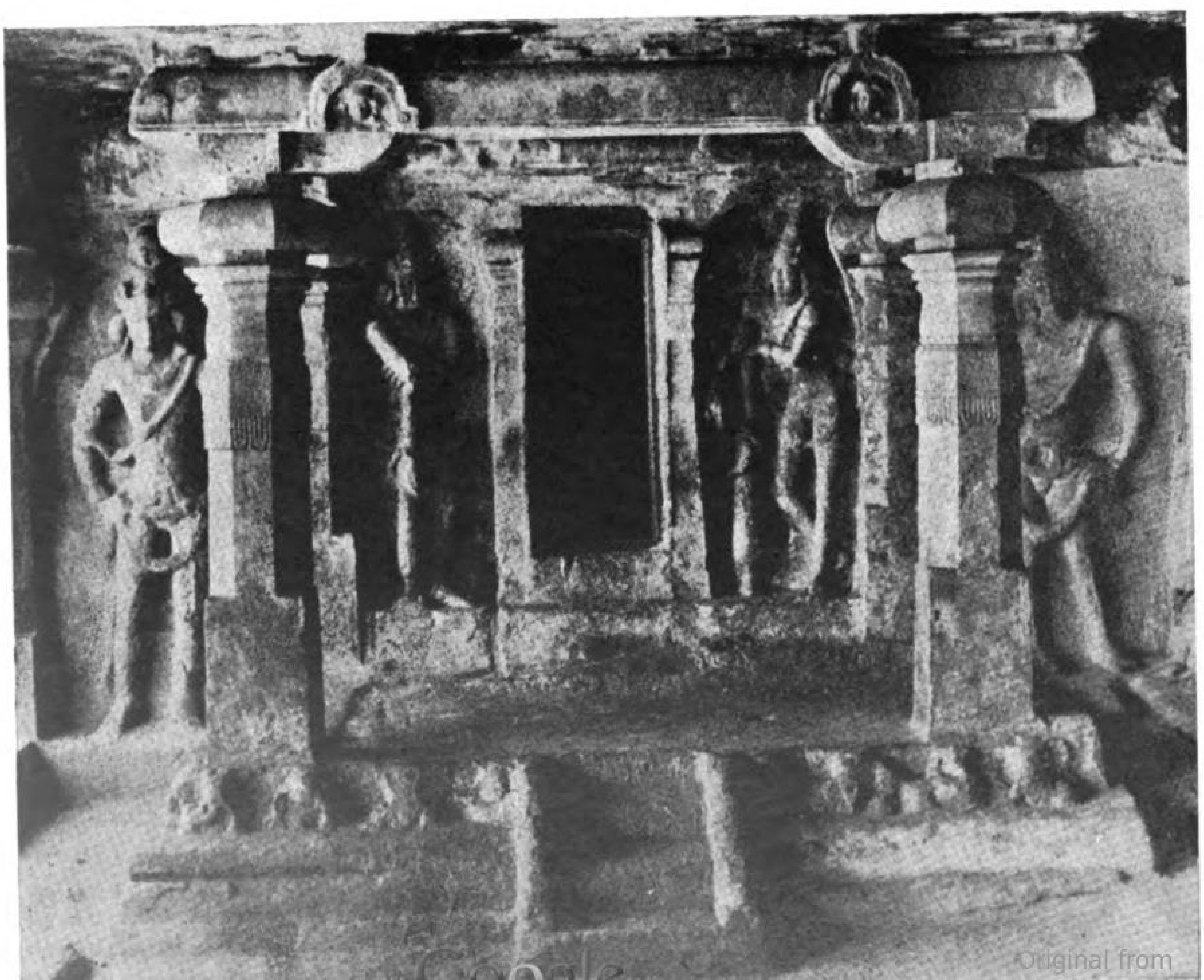
1. Satrumallesvara cave-temple, Dalavanur.



2. Dharmaraja Ratha, [illegible] monolith, Mahabalipuram.

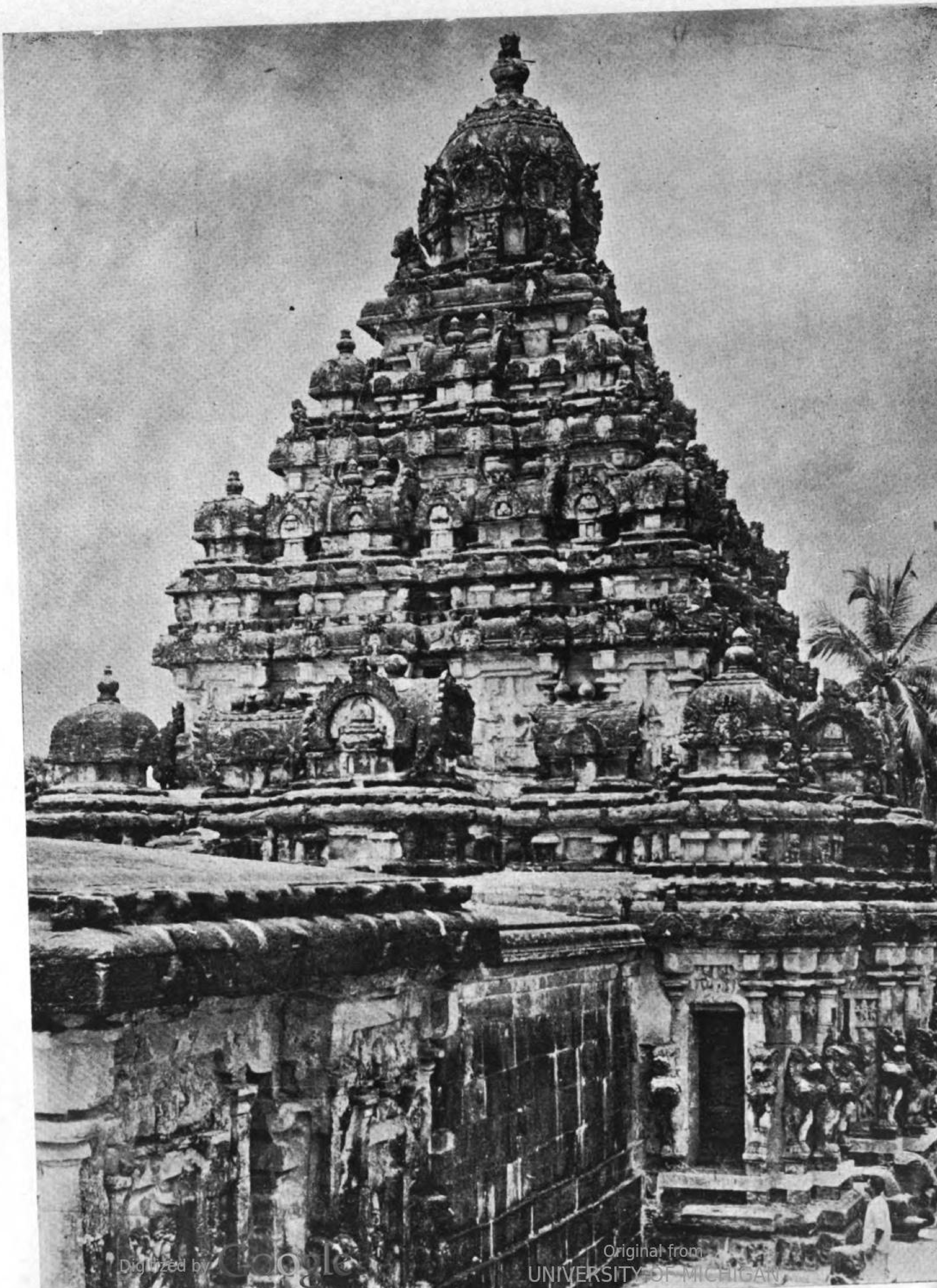


3. Trimurti cave-temple, Mahabalipuram.



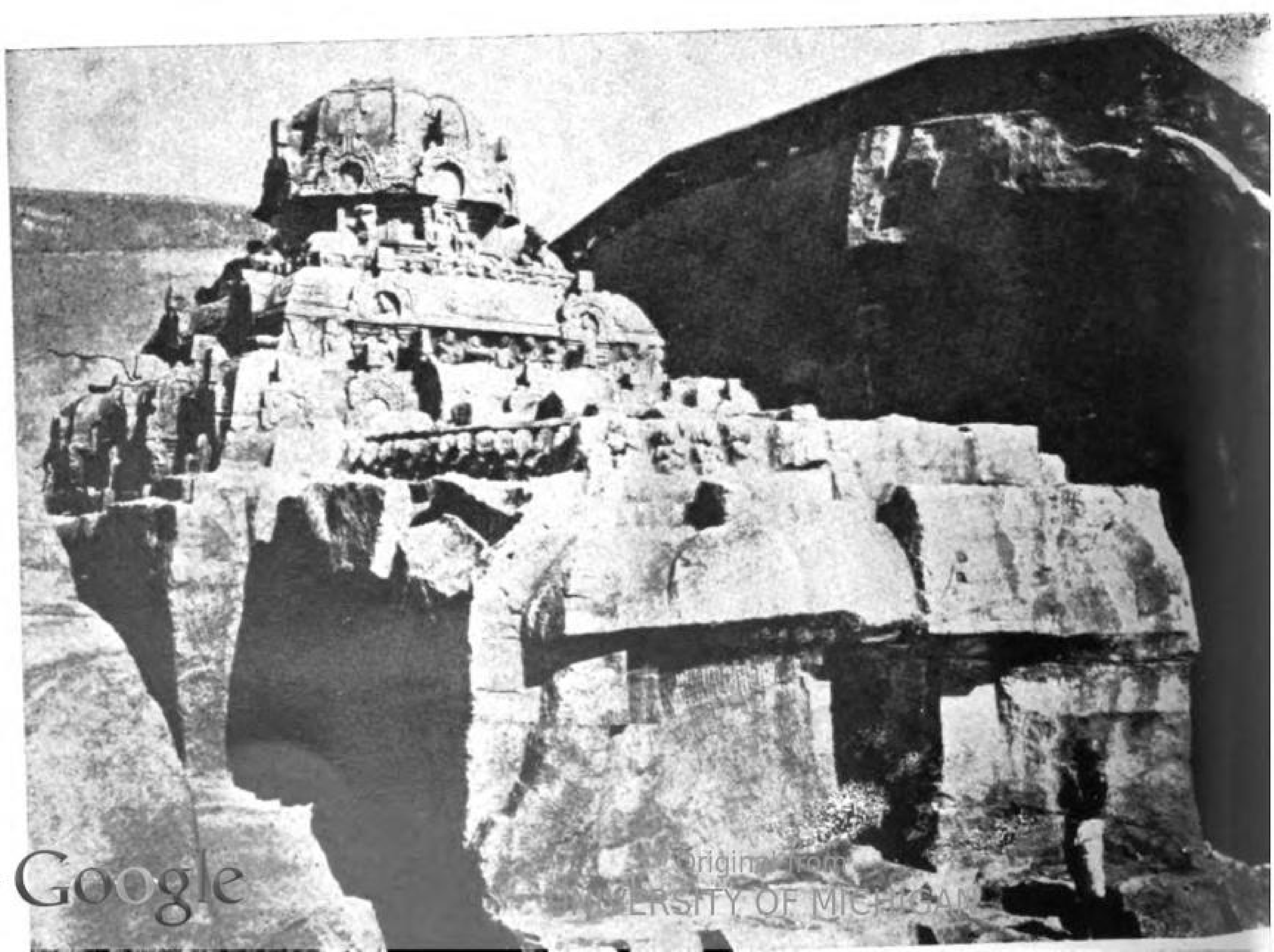
4. Lower rock-cut cave-temple, Tiruchchirappalli

5. Kailasanatha temple, Main *Vimana*, Kanchipuram.

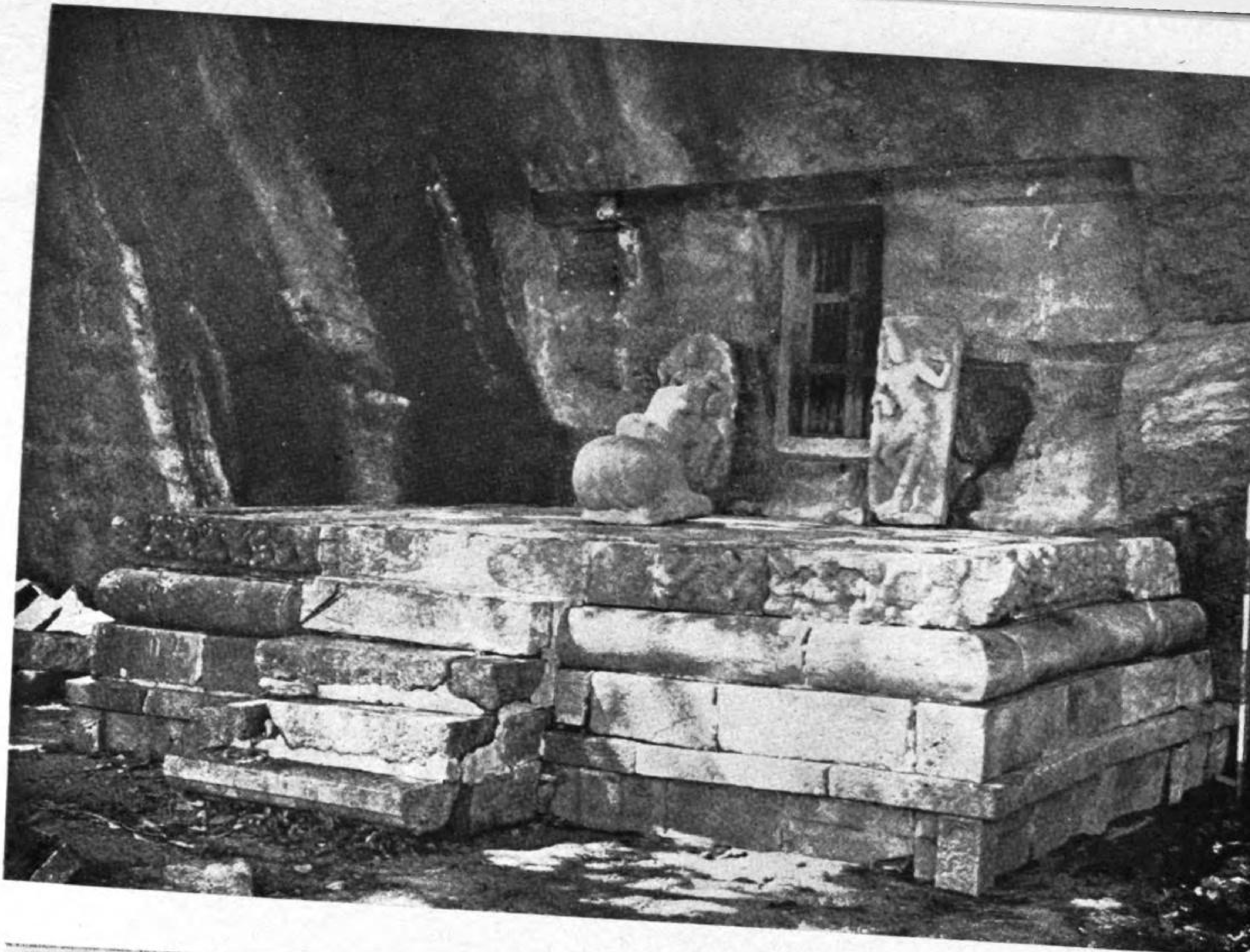




6. Virattanesvara temple, Tiruvadigai.



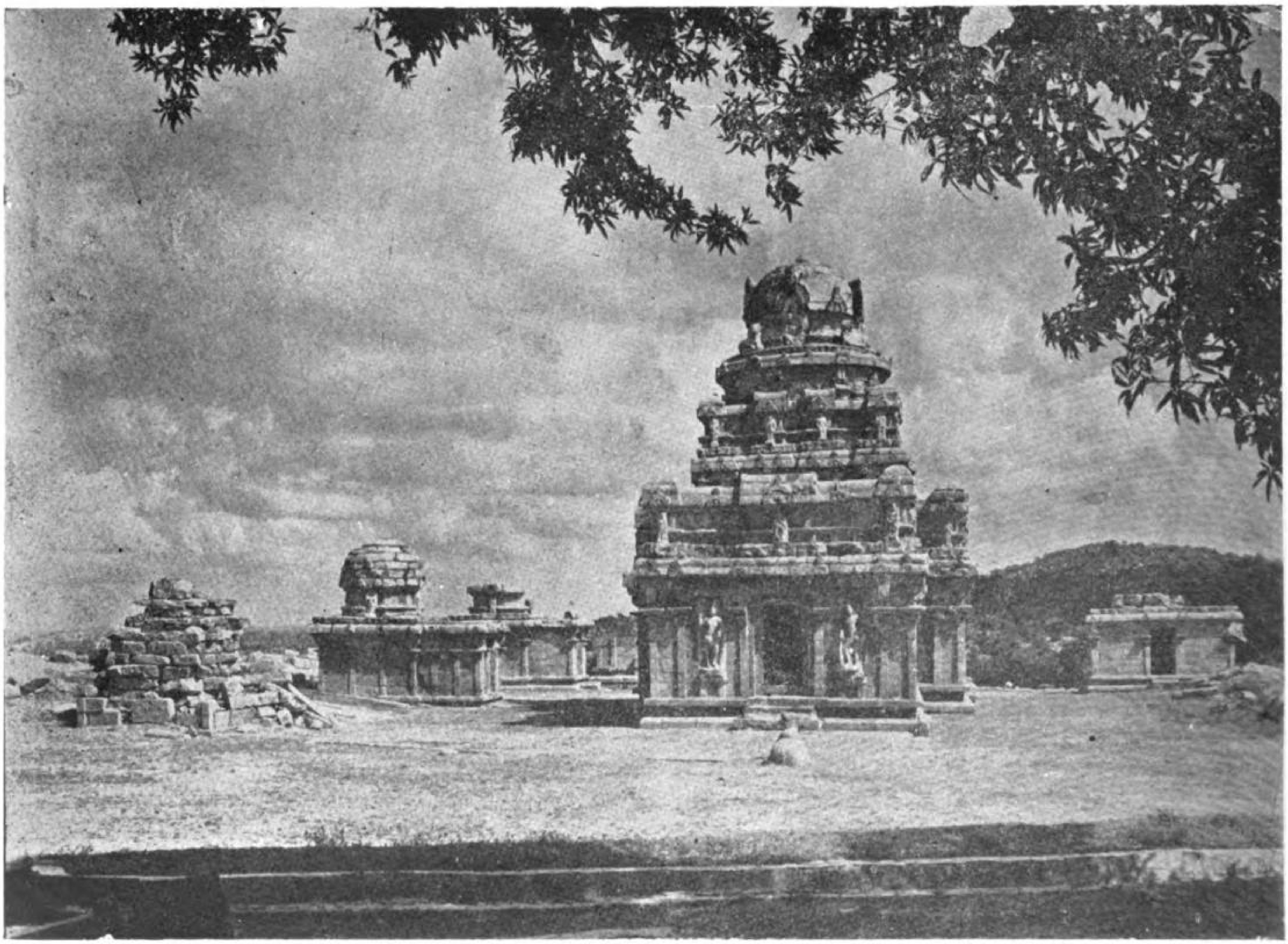
7. Vettuvankoil monolith, Kalugumalai.



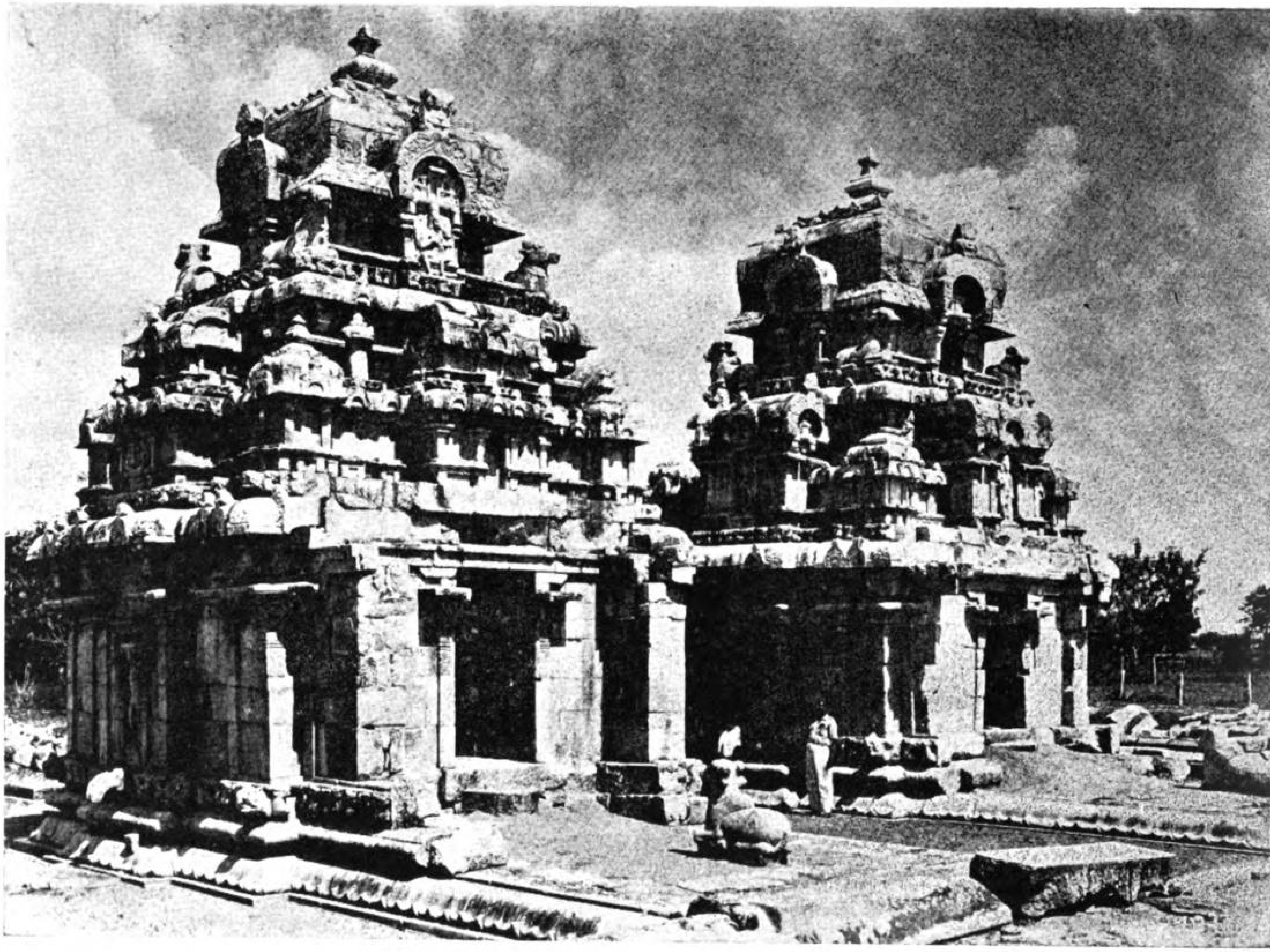
8. Paliyilichchuram cave-*cum*-structural temple, Narttamalai.



9. Virattanesvara temple, Tiruttani.



10. Vijayalayacholisvaram-complex, Narttamalai.



11. Muvarkoil, Kodumbalur.

13. Jvaraharesvara temple, Kanchipuram.

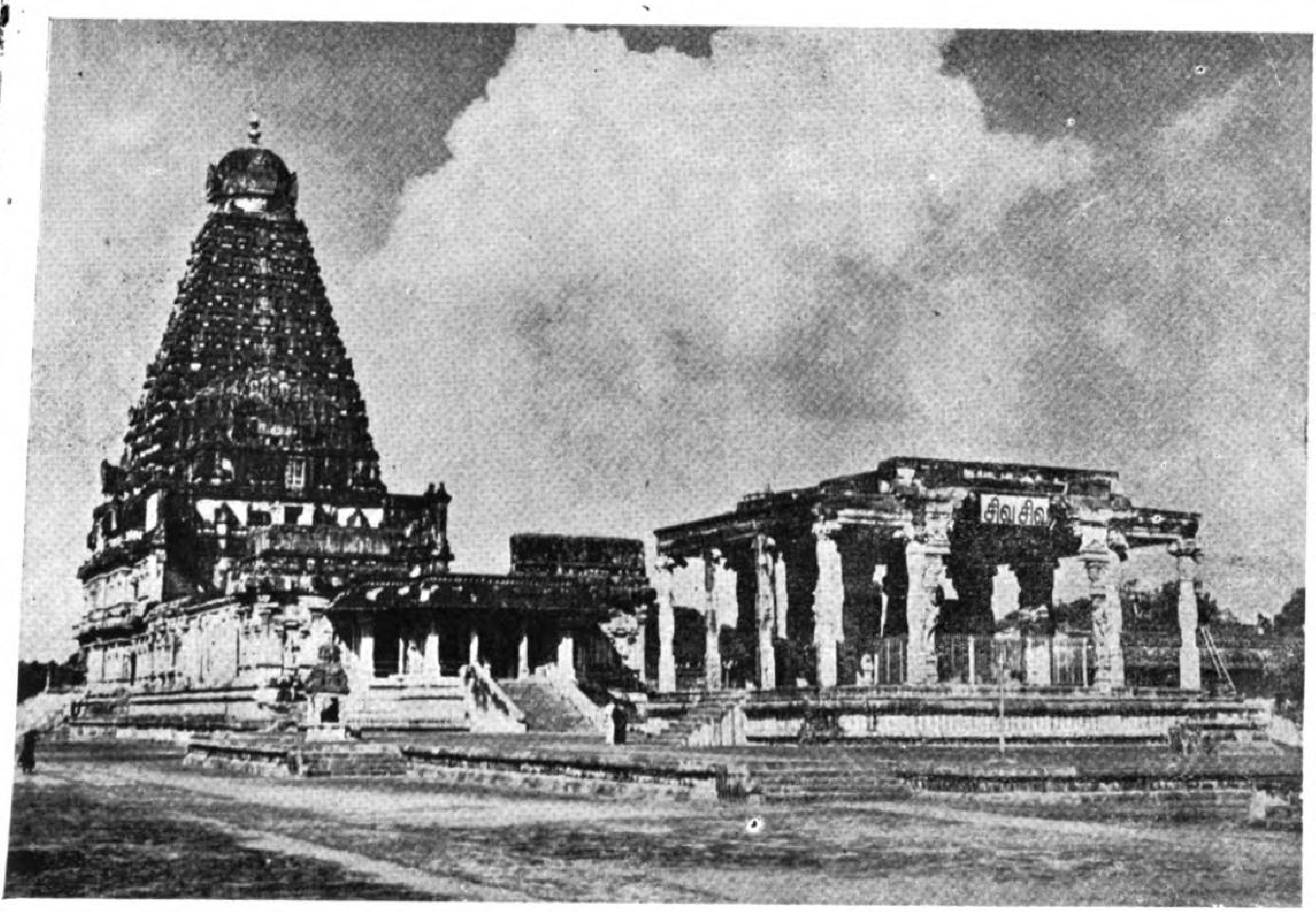




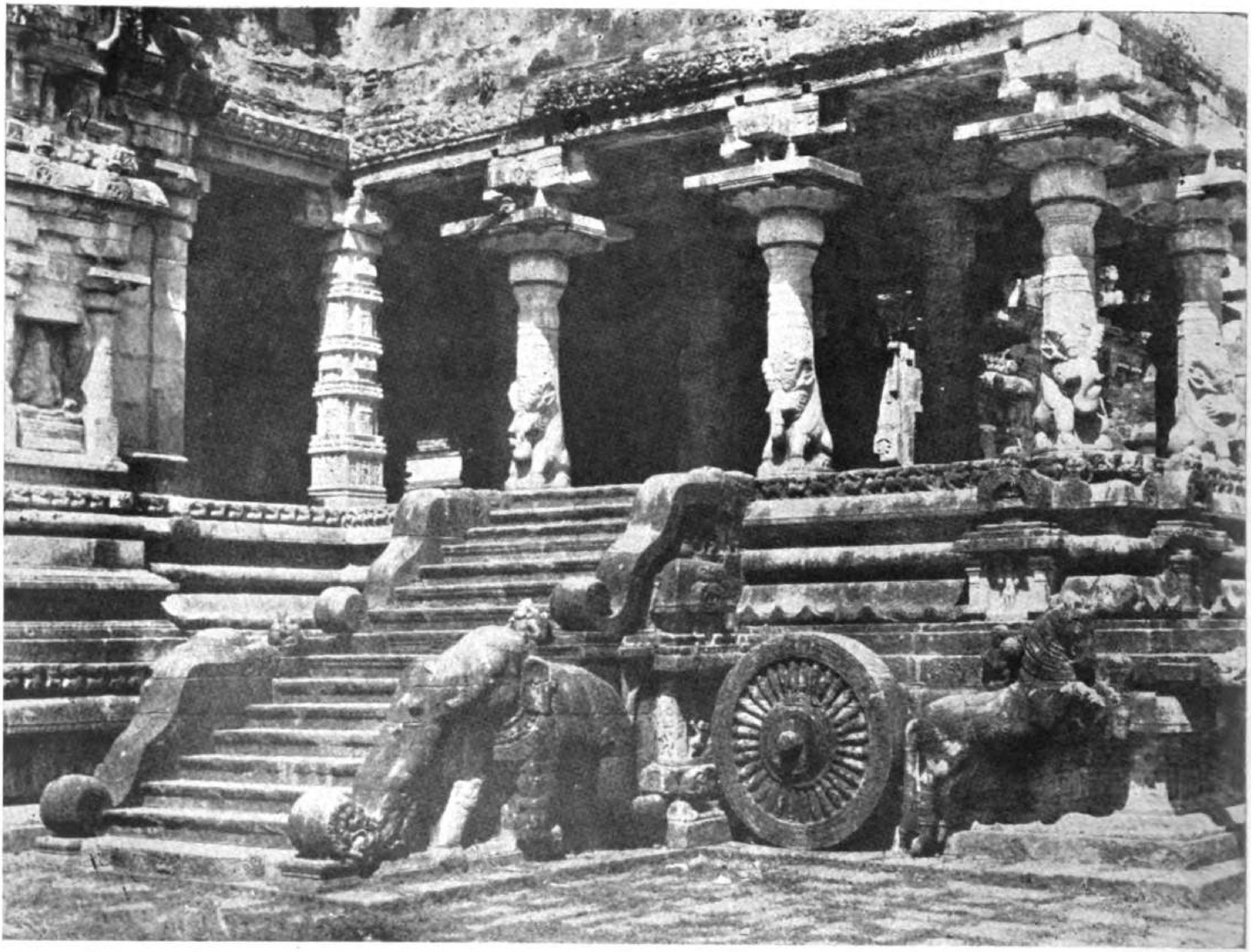
12. Cholisvaram temple, Avanikandarpevesvaram, Kilayur.



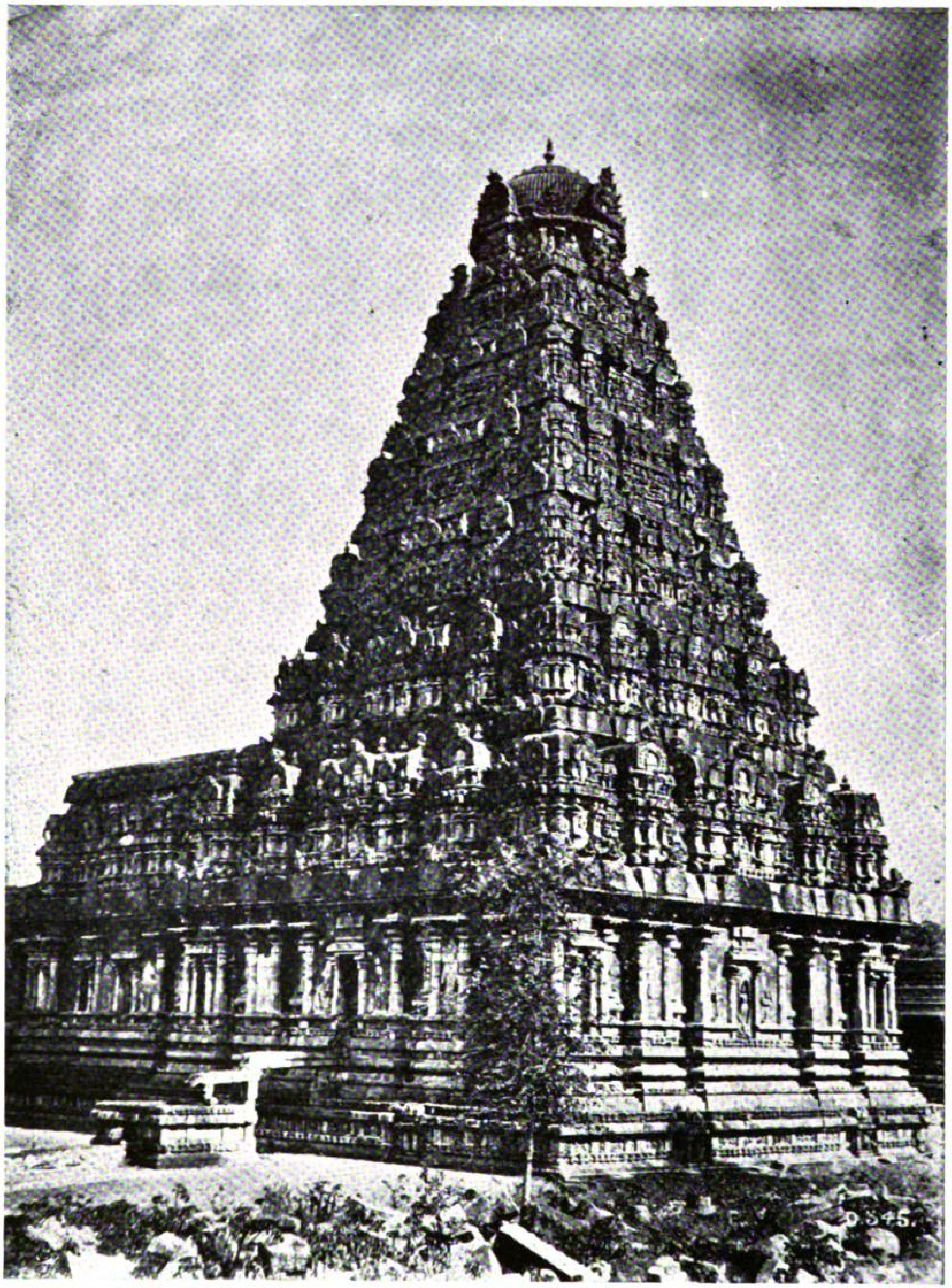
14. Kundangudi Mahadeva temple, Madagadipattu.



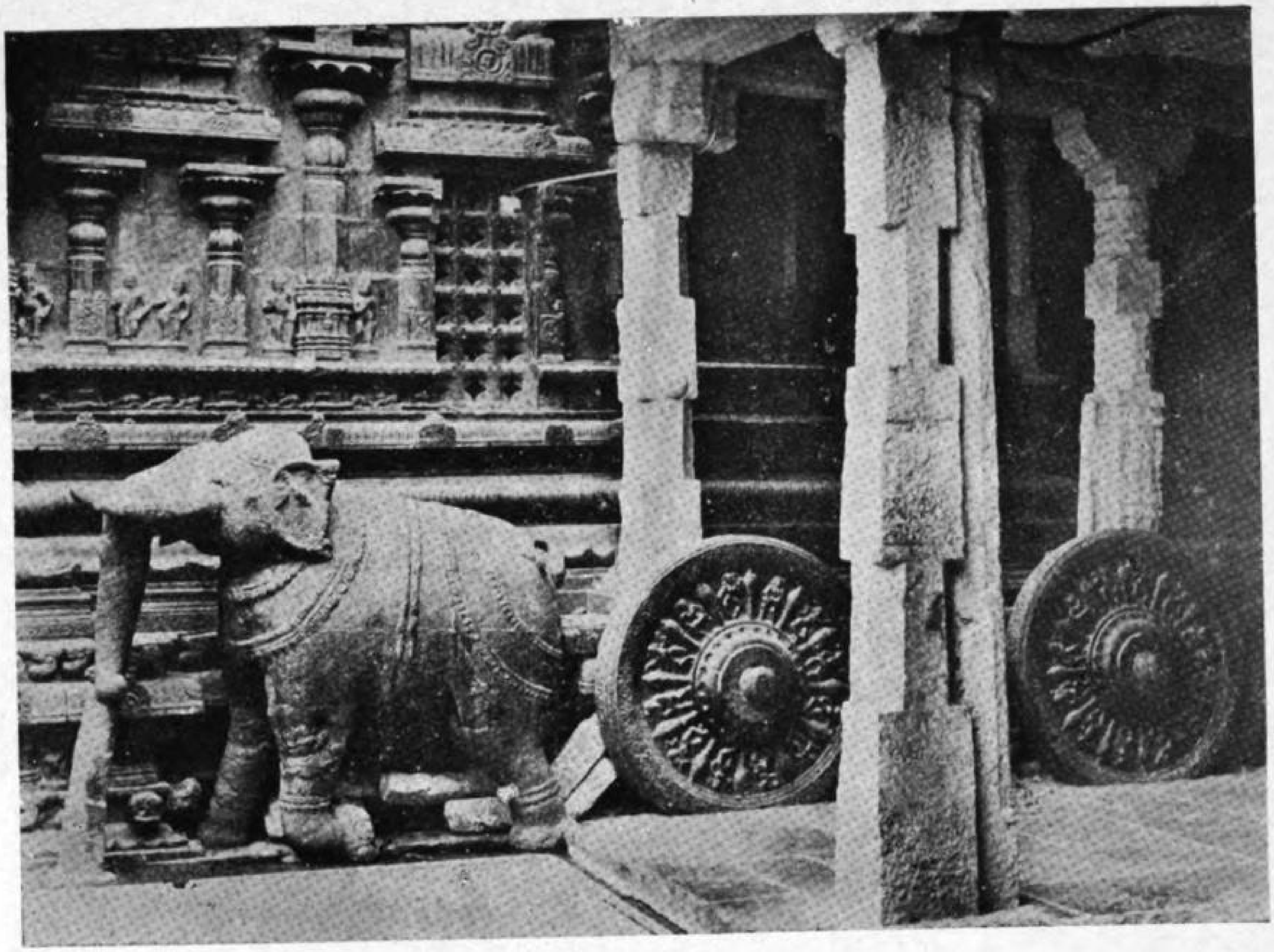
15. Brihadisvara temple, Thanjavur.



16. Rajagambhiran mandapam with chariot design, Darasuram.



17. Kampaharesvara temple, Tribhuvanam.



18. Elephant driven chariot design *mandapa*, Sarangapani temple, Kumbakonam.

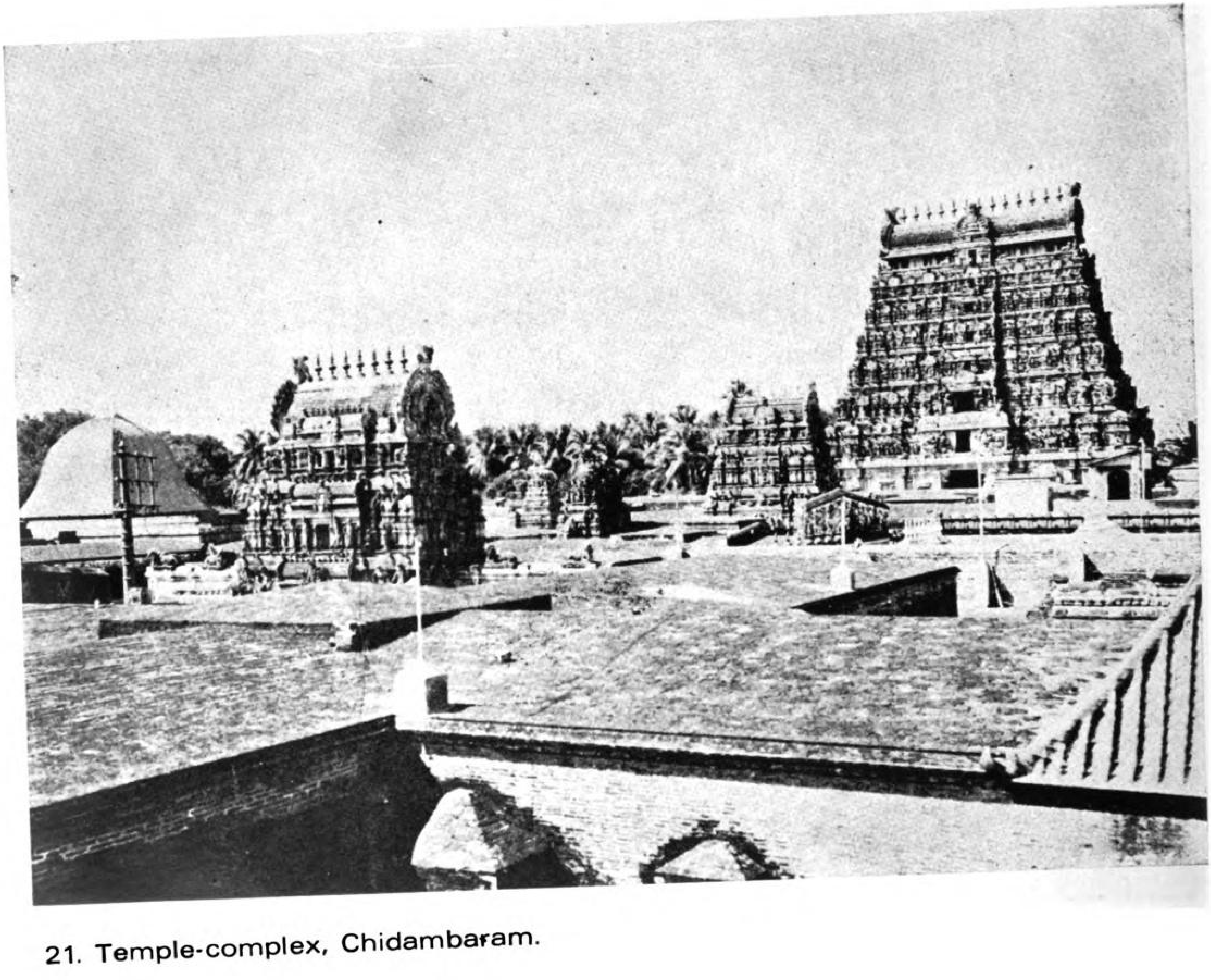
19. Anantasaras tank, *gopuram* and *Kalyanamandapa*, Varadaraja temple, Kanchipuram.





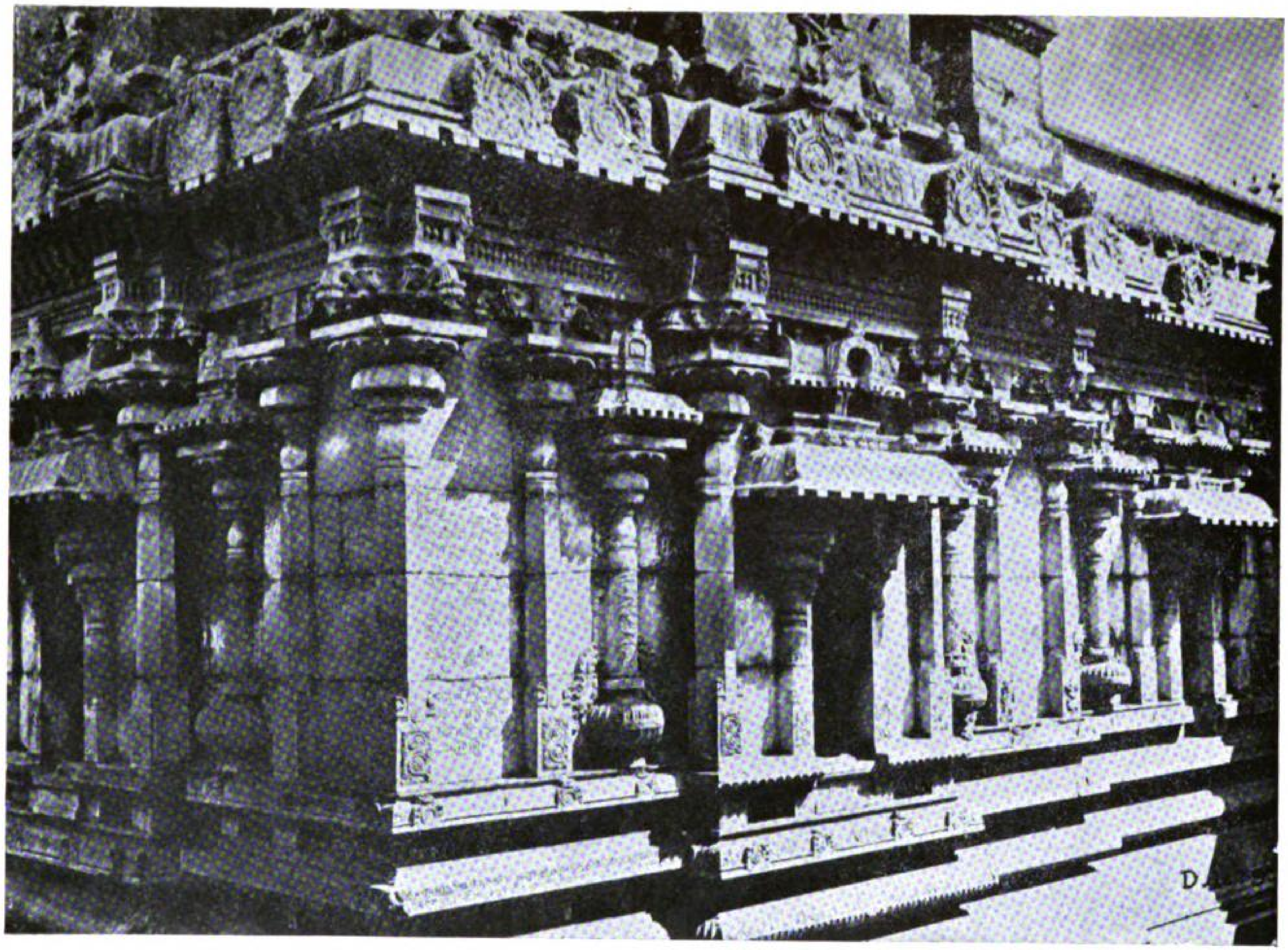
20. Kudulalagar temple, Madurai.

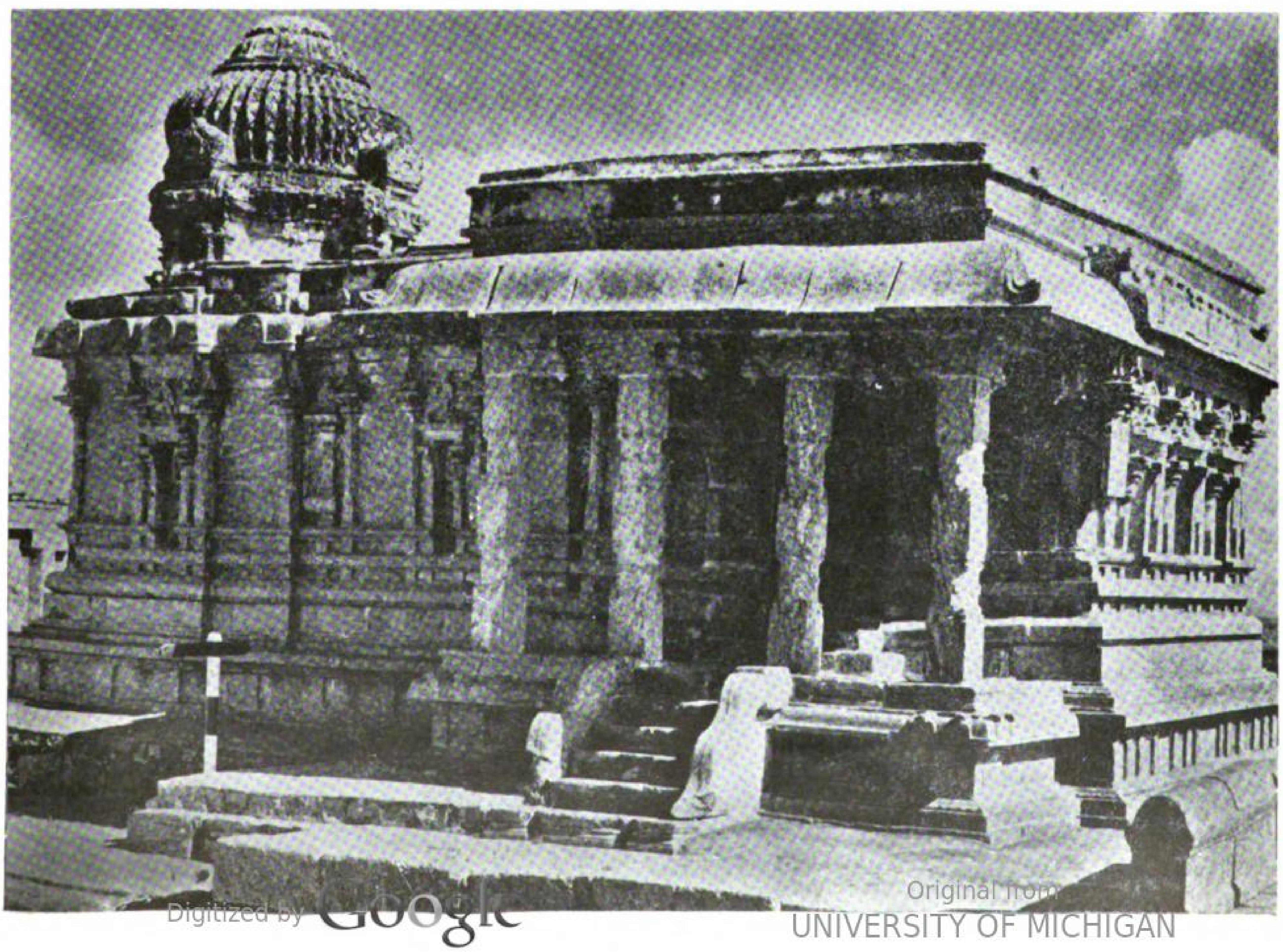
22. Wall architecture of *Tayar* shrine, Varadaraja temple, Kanchipuram.



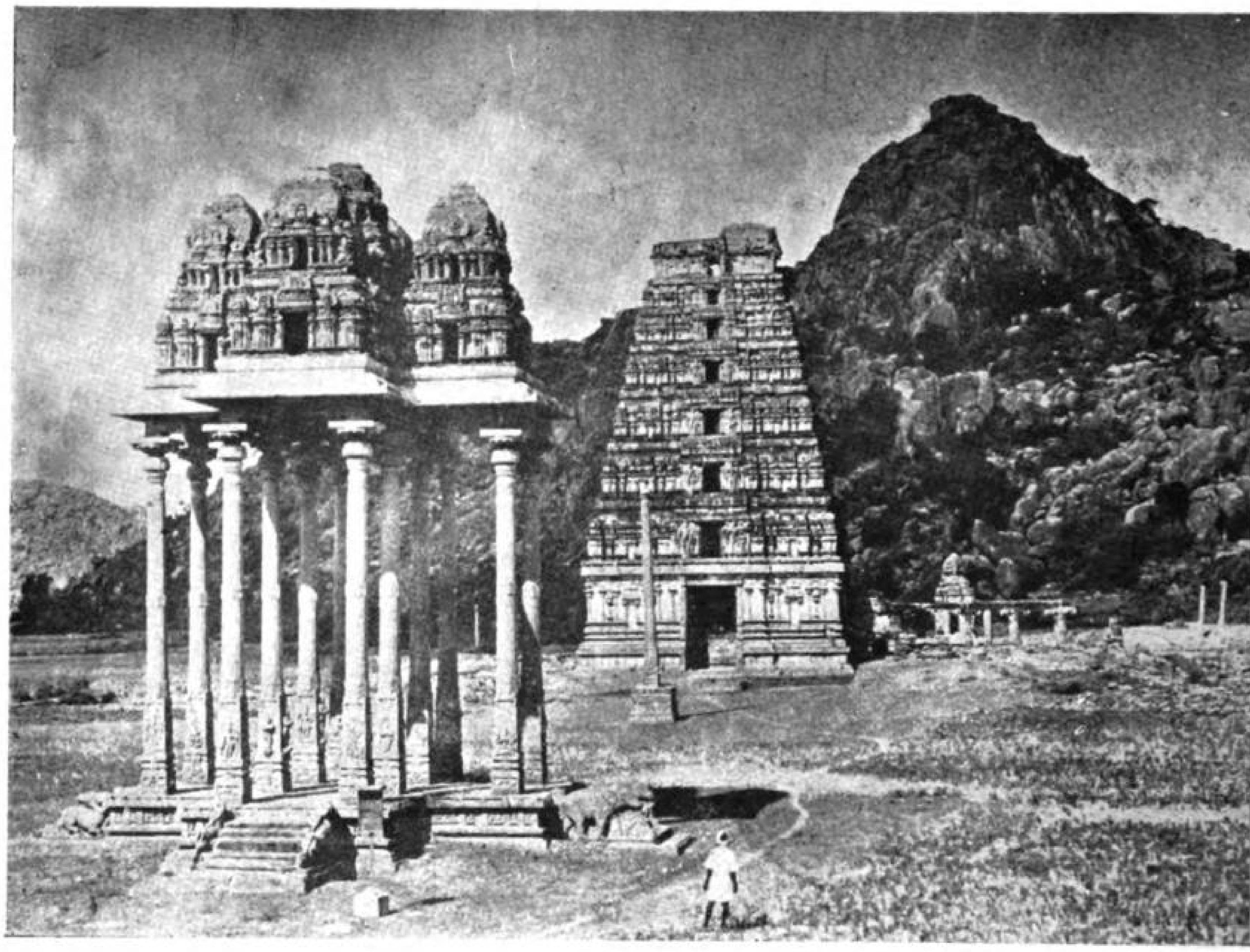
21. Temple-complex, Chidambaram.

23. Ranganatha temple on the citadel top, Gingee.



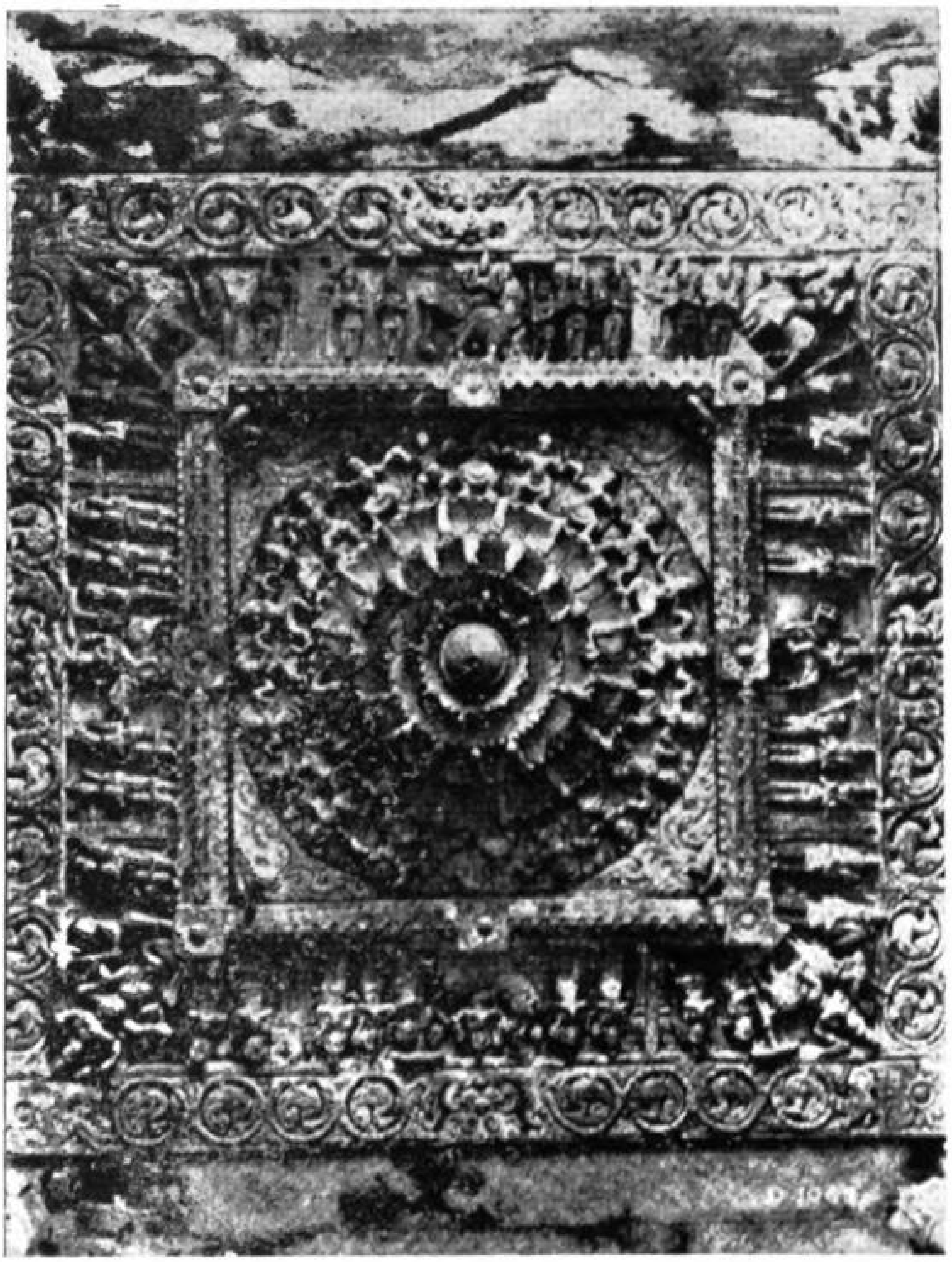


24. Lofty pavilion and *gopura* at Narasingarayan-pettai, near Gingee.

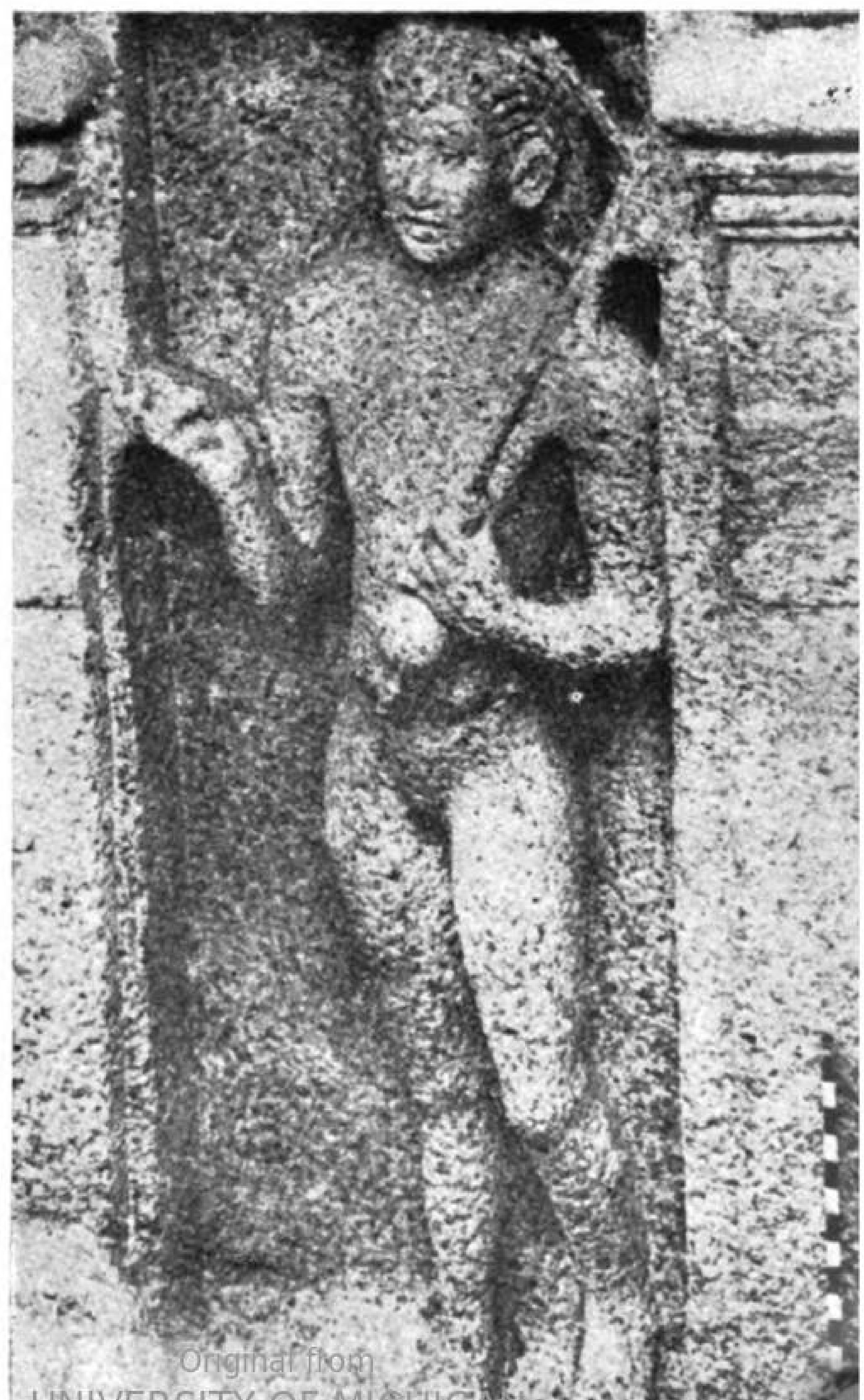




25. Pillar-complex with rearing horse, *Kalyanamandapa*, Jalakantesvara temple, Vellore.



26. Ceiling pattern, Lotus and parrots, *Kalyanamandapa*, Jalakantesvara temple, Vellore.



27. Vinadhara Dakshinamurti, Dharamaraj Ratha, Mahabalipuram.



28. Ekadasa Rudras,
Kailasanatha temple,
Kanchipuram.



29. Parvati under a parasol,
painting on the northern
shrine, Panamalai,
Tamilnadu.



30. Aja-ekapada-trimurti,
Shore Temple,
Mahabalipuram.



31. Gajalakshmi,
Sundaravarada
temple, Uttiramerur.



32. Lingodbhava on south wall, Kailasanatha temple, Kanchipuram.



33. Parvati in Panchagni tapas-siva temple, Valisvaram.



34. Siva Tripurantaka facade-sculpture, Vilinjam.



35. Vaikunthanatha panel, cave-temple, Namakkal.



39. Trivikrama panel, cave-temple, Namakkal



37. Lakulisa, cave-temple, Arittapatti.



38. Garudantika Vishnu, cave-temple, Kunnakudi.



36. Trivikrama panel, cave temple, Namakkal.



37. Lakulisa, cave-temple, Arittapatti.



38. Garudantika Vishnu, cave-temple, Kunnakudi.



39. Jyestha with attendant figures, Tirupparamkunram cave-temple near Madurai.



40. Umamahesvara,
Muvarkoil,
Kodumbalur.



41. Hanuman,
Kodumbalur.



42. Subrhamanya
bronze at
Gangaikondacholapuram.



43. Kannappa nayanar
bronze, Madras
Museum.



44. Nataraja bronze, Kuttalanatha temple, Kuttalam.



45. Rear view of Nataraja
bronze from Kuttalam.



46. Chakrapurusha (or Chakkarattalvar), Varadaraja temple, Kanchipuram.



47. Siva as Jvaraharesvara, Taramangalam.





49. *Samavasarana* lake, mural, cave-temple, Sittannavasal.

48. Raja Raja and Karuvur devar, Chola mural, Thanjavur.



50. Anantasayi, mural painting at Mattancherry Palace, Cochin